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ABSTRACT

This collection focuses on a particular kind of teacher development, called "guiding teacher learning" or "guided practice" to distinguish it from teachers' independent learning in and from teaching. The papers grew out of a seminar for doctoral students interested in developing their practice as teacher educators and developing tools to study that practice. The seminar focused on five elements that are part of any version of guided practice work: participants and their relationship, long and short-term goals, the form and content of the work itself, contextual factors, and conceptual underpinnings. After the Introduction (Sharon Feiman-Nemser), the following papers are presented: (1) "Guiding Teacher Learning: A Fresh Look at a Familiar Practice" (Sharon Feiman-Nemser and Cheryl Rosaen); (2) "Constructing a Practice: How an Educational Vision Shapes the Work of a Field Instructor and Her Teacher Candidates" (Jenny Denyer); (3) "Louise and Me: An Analysis of a Field Instructor's Practice" (Sharon A. Schwille); (4) "Dilemmas of a Field Instructor: A Search for Common Ground" (Jaime Grinberg, Deborah Harris, and Michelle B. Parker); and (5) "Learning with Experience" (Nancy Jennings, Kathleen Peasley, and Cheryl Rosaen). (ND)

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GUIDING TEACHER LEARNING

Insider Studies of Classroom Work with Prospective & Practicing Teachers

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AACTE

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Introduction

This collection focuses on a particular kind of teacher development. The authors call it "guiding teacher learning" or "guided practice" to distinguish this professional activity from teachers' independent learning in and from teaching. The work of guiding and supporting teacher learning in school settings is carried out under a variety of labels including clinical supervision, field instruction, advising, mentoring, coaching, and training with follow-up. The people who do this work may come from universities, schools, or another educational agency. Still, all these approaches are situated in a professional relationship and in the context of teaching, and all rely on observation and conversation as central tools in teacher development.

The papers grew out of a seminar for doctoral students interested in developing their practice as teacher educators and developing tools to study that practice. The instructors, Sharon Feiman-Nemser and Cheryl Rosaen, wanted to provide conceptual tools for thinking about field-based work with preservice and practicing teachers. Based on an analysis of different traditions and schools of thought, they constructed a dynamic framework around five elements that are part of any version of guided practice work. The elements include the participants and their relationship, long and short-term goals, the form and content of the work itself, contextual factors, and conceptual underpinnings.

The first paper, "Guiding Teacher Learning: A Fresh Look at a Familiar Practice," presents the framework along with a comparative analysis of two models of "coaching" which interpret the five elements in different ways. The papers which follow apply the framework to the study of guided practice work with preservice and practicing teachers. The authors, former doctoral students enrolled in the seminar, were either studying their own work as field instructors and student teaching supervisors or studying a colleague's efforts to guide and support the learning of preservice or practicing teachers. These studies provide insights into the reasoning and intentions of the guides—what they hoped to accomplish, why they chose particular ways of talking and acting, how they thought about the ensuing interactions—and concrete descriptions of their moves. They also shed light on the learning of teachers at different stages by providing evidence of changes in instructional thinking and practice and some obstacles to that learning.

Affiliated with the same thematic teacher preparation program, Jenny Denyer and Sharon Schwille show how program goals and the learning needs of their teacher candidates shaped their ways of working in the field. From their self-studies we learn about the improvisational nature of guided practice and its educative potential. Jaime Grinberg and Deborah Harris study Michelle Parker's interactions with a resistant student teacher. From this study by two outsiders and an insider, we learn about some core dilemmas of guided practice work. Nancy Jennings and Kathleen Peasley study Cheryl Rosaen's efforts to help experienced teachers think differently about curriculum, teaching, and assessment through a teacher study group and a co-teaching relationship with one teacher. From this multifaceted study of guided practice in a professional development school, we see how fluid the labels "novice" and "expert" can be.

In recent years, we have seen a flurry of interest in mentoring as more and more states enact legislation requiring some form of mentored support for beginning teachers. This volume places mentoring, the supervision of student teachers, and other forms of guided practice in a common framework and helps us look critically at the professional practice of guiding and supporting teacher learning in school settings. It shows us that this practice depends on knowledge, skills, and judgment, that it is shaped by school culture, program goals, and other contextual factors, that it reflects participants' expectations and beliefs and their underlying visions of teaching and learning to teach.

In recent years, we have also seen a growing interest in research by and for practitioners. While most attention has focused on research by K-12 teachers, practitioner research offers parallel benefits to teacher educators as well. With its multiple levels of reflection and analysis, this volume models several ways that teacher educators can advance their field by developing analytic frameworks, elucidating specific episodes of teacher development, and uncovering the intellectual and practical underpinnings of their work.

— *Sharon Feiman-Nemser, ed.*

Guiding Teacher Learning: A Fresh Look at a Familiar Practice

Sharon Feiman-Nemser & Cheryl Rosaen

> Guidance is not just external opposition. It is freeing the life-process for its own most adequate fulfillment. (Dewey, 1943, p. 17)

In 1994, we designed and taught a course for doctoral students in teacher education at Michigan State University. Called "Guiding Teacher Learning," the course focused on a particular form of professional activity directed toward helping teachers learn to teach and learn from their teaching. Guided learning to teach is face-to-face, close-to-the-classroom work. It can involve a classroom or university-based teacher working with a novice or student teacher, or it can take place among a group of teachers. While most forms of guided learning in and from teaching rely on observation and conversation as critical tools for learning and improving teaching, the meaning of instructional improvement and the forms and functions of these activities vary.

Guided learning in teaching is carried out under various labels—clinical supervision, coaching, advising, mentoring—to name a few. Some of these names are bound up with other issues besides the improvement of teaching. For example, mentoring is associated with issues of teacher leadership and teacher induction (Little, 1990); supervision often intersects with issues of teacher evaluation (Blumberg, 1974). We chose the label "guided learning to teach" because of its descriptive value. We wanted to distinguish learning teaching with guidance from independent learning to teaching and from other forms of teacher education and teacher learning that are not directly situated in classroom practice.

Much of the discourse about such work is framed in terms of models. Researchers study how well the practices of student teaching supervisors fit the tenets of clinical supervision. Staff developers promote models of peer coaching. Training programs for mentor teachers advocate supervision cycles consisting of pre-observation conferences, classroom observations, and post-observation conferences. All this reinforces the belief that effective guides, whether they be called coaches, supervisors, mentors, or cooperating teachers, follow particular models and implement prescribed practices. In our course, we wanted to provide analytic tools for appraising different approaches and for reasoning about particular courses of action in the context of guided practice work with teachers. We also wanted to help doctoral students develop a principled stance toward guiding teacher learning. To accomplish these ends, we developed a conceptual framework that can be used to analyze different traditions and to study particular enactments of guided practice in teaching. Many of our doctoral students were working as field instructors or student teaching supervisors in our preservice programs or in curriculum-based projects in one of the professional development schools (PDSes) affiliated with Michigan State University. Their firsthand experiences provided valuable examples of the realities and dilemmas of guiding teacher learning in different contexts and the limitations of thinking about this kind of work in terms of fidelity to a particular model.

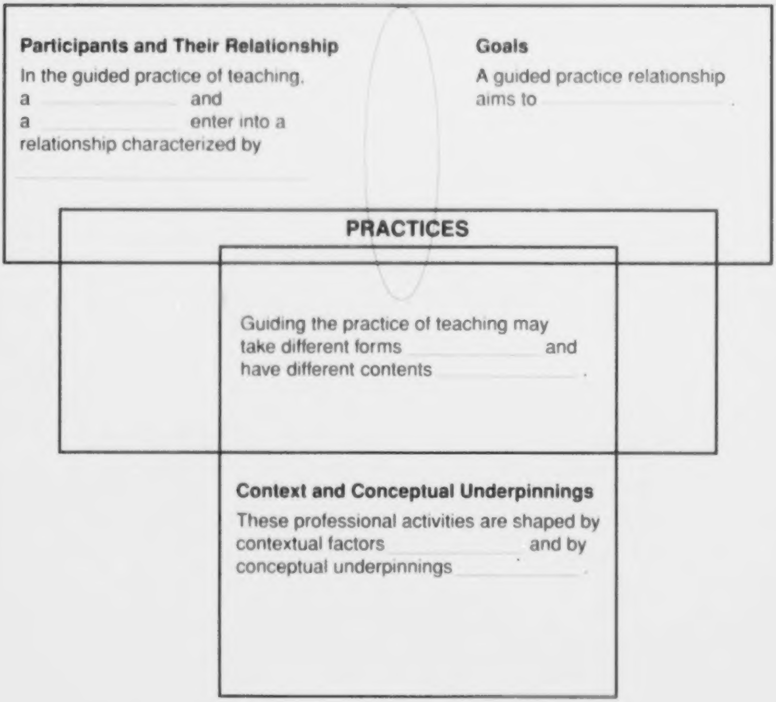
In this paper, we discuss our framework, analyzing each element from both a descriptive and a normative perspective. We also show how the framework can be used as a basis for analyzing and comparing different traditions of guidance. Finally, we describe how we helped students construct a normative stance to use in appraising particular instances of guided learning with teachers. Throughout the paper, we draw on readings from the course, including case studies, prescriptive literature on close-to-the-classroom work with teachers, and philosophical and analytic writing. This paper also serves as an introduction to the cases that follow. Originally written as a course assignment and subsequently revised for publication, the papers apply the framework to the study of particular instances of guided learning with prospective and practicing teachers. Each paper highlights issues, dilemmas, and tensions that emerged from careful study of one episode in practice.

The Guided Practice Framework

In developing our framework, we thought about different models such as clinical supervision and peer coaching. We also reflected on our own close-to-the-classroom work with preservice and inservice teachers, asking ourselves the following questions: (1) What are the key features that cut across different traditions? (2) What aspects of the work do we have to consider in order to understand why a particular approach or enactment looks the way it does? We noted, for example, that guided practice occurs in the context of a professional relationship, that it can be described in terms of core activities such as observation and conversation, that it is shaped by internal factors such as participants' personal dispositions and beliefs and by external factors such as program philosophies and school cultures. These considerations led us to identify five interacting elements: (1) participants and their relationship, (2) goals, (3) practices, (4) context, and (5) conceptual underpinnings. We organized these elements into a set of facet statements.[1] Figure 1 shows the dynamic relationship among the elements and places practices at the center to emphasize our approach to understanding guided practice work.

FIGURE 1

Intersections of Guided Practice Elements


Participants and Their Relationship
In the guided practice of teaching,
a ______ and
a ______ enter into a
relationship characterized by
______
Goals
A guided practice relationship
aims to ______.
PRACTICES
Guiding the practice of teaching may
take different forms ______ and
have different contents ______.
Context and Conceptual Underpinnings
These professional activities are shaped by
contextual factors ______ and by
conceptual underpinnings ______.

Participants and Their Relationship

There are many ways to characterize the participants who form a relationship aimed at guided learning in teaching. We can focus on the qualities of mind and heart that individuals bring and that influence their receptivity and responsiveness to the relationship and the work. We can focus on the formal positions that participants occupy and their associated expectations and responsibilities. We can also look at the relationship itself, characterizing its political, moral, or interpersonal qualities and dynamics. The approach we choose depends on the purposes of the analysis and the position of the analyst vis a vis the relationship.

Personal Qualities

The question of personal dispositions can be framed in both descriptive and normative terms. We can ask, "What qualities do particular individuals actually bring to a guided practice relationship?" or we can ask, "What personal qualities should they bring to make the relationship a productive or educative one?" Since many educators have endorsed reflectivity as a desirable quality in teachers, Dewey's (1933) ideas about the attitudes associated with a reflective disposition provide one answer to the normative question.

According to Dewey, the habit of reflection is sustained by three intellectual attitudes—open-mindedness, wholeheartedness, and responsibility. Being open-minded means being actively alert to and curious about new facts, ideas, questions, possibilities. Being wholehearted means giving your full attention to the matter at hand. Being intellectually responsible means considering the consequences that flow from a projected position. These intellectual habits of mind would be valuable in teaching and learning to teach, and in a serious guided practice relationship.

Besides looking at participants in terms of individual qualities and characteristics, we can consider the formal obligations or expectations associated with the guide's role or position. For instance, a big issue in guided practice is whether a guide should have formal responsibility for teacher evaluation. In most preservice programs, university supervisors do evaluate student teachers while still being expected to foster norms of inquiry and collegiality. On the other hand, many induction programs deliberately locate the functions of assistance and assessment in different individuals on the assumption that beginning teachers will develop greater trust and be more willing to take risks and ask for help in non-evaluative relationships (Odell, 1990; Huling-Austin, 1990; Huffman & Leak, 1986).

Of course, assessment does not disappear just because a guide has no formal responsibility for evaluating the teacher(s) with whom she works. For one thing, judgments inevitably enter into any effort to understand teaching because of the anticipatory, interpretive nature of human understanding (Hogan, 1983). Secondly, there is a strong tendency to view teaching in terms of one's personal ideology which is why Zeichner and Tabachnick (1982) recommend a "careful self-scrutiny of one's belief system...as a necessary part of a supervisor's education" (p. 51). A big challenge for the guide is deciding whether and how to act on the judgments formed.

The Relationship

Beyond the individual participants, we can focus on the relationship itself as the unit of analysis. For example, if we adopt a political lens, we can ask about the distribution of status and power between the person giving and the person receiving the guidance. Traditional models of supervision accord the supervisor more status and power than the teacher being supervised. The very term "supervisor" connotes a hierarchical relationship. Interestingly, the creators of clinical supervision in teaching (Goldhammer, 1969; Cogan, 1973) cautioned against a superior-subordinate relationship. Rather they advocated a collegial relationship in which "the teacher and the clinical supervisor work together as associates and equals...bound together by a common purpose." In the same spirit, some recent efforts to define mentoring relationships (e.g. Healy & Weilchart, 1991) stipulate reciprocity as a defining feature. In such relationships, both partners are teachers and learners. This raises an interesting question about what reciprocity means when more and less experienced teachers work together.

We can also talk about guided practice relationships in terms of their human or moral dimensions. In this regard, Noddings' (1986) formulation of an "ethic of caring" based on "fidelity to persons" offers an inspiring though somewhat vague perspective. In a "caring" guided-practice relationship, participants would help each other realize their ethical ideals. The focus would be on the growth of individuals and the maintenance of community. The guide would model caring, seeking to understand the teacher's subjective experience. Practice teaching would include "practice in caring:"

> There is an attitude to be sustained and enhanced as well as a set of skills to be learned. By working with master teachers whose fidelity is to persons, new teachers will have an opportunity to learn that this fidelity induces a drive for competence, more and deeper learning, responsible experimentation with instructional arrangements, considered suggestions for structural changes in school, and the exercise of imagination in resolving conflicts (p. 504).

Thinking about participants and their relationship reminds us that guiding teacher learning is intensely personal work and that its success depends on the individuals involved and the affinity they have for each other and for the work. At the same time, we also recognize that these relationships are shaped by their contexts and by the goals and expectations that participants hold for themselves and for each other.

Goals and Purposes

At the most general level, the purpose of guided practice relationships in teaching is to improve teaching, but improving teaching in this way can take different forms and mean different things. In our reading of the literature, we found that such work may serve four broad and overlapping purposes. They include helping teachers (1) realize new visions of teaching in their daily practice; (2) implement a new curriculum or teaching strategy; (3) study their practice in systematic ways; and (4) restructure teaching.

For example, a mentor teacher may help a novice develop her practice by learning to implement the vision of good teaching which the novice brings from her teacher preparation. An experienced first-grade teacher might find herself teaching fifth grade for the first time and seek an adviser to help her learn new content and figure out how to teach it to older children. We can also imagine a guide helping teachers design and implement cooperative learning tasks or launch a writer's workshop. Finally, guides might help teachers learn to study their teaching through observation, journal writing, and conversation. Serious guided practice challenges traditional norms and structures that keep teachers isolated from one another and may lead to new structures. As teachers develop and refine their practice, they may see value in changing their daily schedule to provide longer blocks of time in each subject area or to accommodate joint planning.

Beyond the broad orienting purposes, guides shape their work around more immediate goals arising from the practical realities of the situation and from the teacher's concerns. In a case study of a thoughtful support teacher, Feiman-Nemser (1991) shows how Pete Frazer pursues emergent goals within a broad definition of his role and aims. In one episode with Frank, a beginning teacher, Frazer is careful not to confront the novice's mathematical confusions directly. Rather he brings a game he used to help his own pupils understand multiplication. Working with a small group, Frazer gathers information about how individual students make sense of the mathematical problems he poses. Later he shares this information with Frank, indirectly clarifying Frank's mathematical misunderstandings while modeling the importance of attending to the thinking and sense-making of individual pupils.

Questions about goals can be framed in descriptive and normative terms. Asking descriptive questions can help uncover the goals—short-term and long-range, intended and enacted—of a particular approach to guided practice or a particular guide. Asking normative questions can help uncover assumptions about what the work of guided practice ought to be like and where the goals should come from. Thinking through such questions, one confronts some of the dilemmas associated with this kind of work. How should a university supervisor balance her commitment to program goals and her sensitivity to student teachers' concerns? What happens when an adviser sets out to help teachers define their own agendas and discovers that some of the agendas conflict with the adviser's beliefs about good teaching? How can mentor teachers support the development of beginning teachers while attending to issues of accountability?

Such questions illustrate the intersection of goals with other elements in our framework. For example, who the participants are (e.g., their personalities, designated roles and responsibilities, career stage) and the kind of relationship they have (e.g., hierarchical, collegial, personal) will affect the goals they hold or should pursue. Furthermore, the goals shape the character of the relationship. For example, assigning an evaluative role to the guide may preclude the option of developing a reciprocal relationship. Goals also influence and are influenced by the nature of the practice itself.

Practices: Form and Content

We began our study of guiding teacher learning with the intention of focusing on the work itself—its forms and content. We wanted to emphasize that this is a professional activity in its own right, that it can be studied in the same ways that researchers and practitioners study classroom teaching. We also wanted to explore the contribution of this form of professional development to teachers' learning.

To characterize the "practice" of guided learning to teach, we identified some of the basic forms that the work takes such as observation, conversation, co-planning, co-teaching. How these forms are enacted affects the relationship and the opportunities for teacher learning that it holds out. For example, guides who adopt an "advisory" role (Apelman, 1980; Sproul, 1978; Manolakes, 1977) may assist teachers by participating in daily planning and teaching, promoting teacher learning through modeling ways of working with children and thinking aloud about their pedagogical decisions and actions.

As we studied particular instances of guided practice and descriptions of different traditions, we saw a need to refine our categories, moving beyond the familiar vocabulary of scripting, pattern analysis, conferencing, feedback, and supervision cycles. This was the motivation behind the case study of Pete Frazer, a thoughtful support teacher with a well-developed language for describing his role and his work with novice teachers. Through interviews and observations, Feiman-Nemser (1992) identified eight "moves" that Pete Frazer named, justified, and demonstrated as he enacted his role as "co-thinker" with novice teachers. These included "finding openings," "pinpointing problems," "probing novices' thinking," "noticing signs of growth," "reinforcing an understanding of theory," "giving living examples of someone else's teaching," and "modeling wondering about teaching." Several traditions of guided practice emphasize the importance of focusing on the teacher's concerns rather than the guide's. Still, the process of deciding which concern or problem to deal with is not always straightforward. In the first place, problems do not come ready-made; they must be constructed out of a problematic situation (Dewey, 1933; Schon, 1983). Some concerns may be more fruitful than others to pursue, a decision that requires judgment. Finally, the teacher's stated concerns may not represent the underlying issues that most need attention. Uncovering those issues requires sensitivity and skill on the part of the guide.

Pete Frazer appreciates the complexities of this interpretive process. His approach involves "finding openings" and "pinpointing problems." Frazer sees fruitful openings as topics that have salience for the novice and that can lead to a consideration of basic issues that teachers need to think about. In order to have productive conversations about problems of teaching, Frazer takes time to "pinpoint" the problem, clarifying more precisely what is at issue and figuring out what to work on. When a beginning teacher tells Frazer that she's worried because reading isn't going very well, he arranges a time to talk. In describing the kind of conversation he hopes to have, he defines what he means by "pinpointing problems."

> I want to help her clarify what she means by "reading isn't going well." I mean, let's sort out the elements because it's such a big statement ... I'd like to think with her, to help her pinpoint more exactly what she means about reading not going well. And that means looking for strengths as well as things she wants to change (Feiman-Nemser, 1992, pp. 8-9).

The case provides an inside look at the forms and content of guided practice as described by one thoughtful guide. It reveals the artistry of the work itself and illustrates how much we can learn about guided practice by studying the "wisdom of practice."

In general, the literature on guided practice tends to emphasize structures and procedures and give less attention to issues of content. But what guides and teachers talk about is also consequential. Many studies of beginning teachers cite discipline and management as dominant concerns (Veenman, 1983), contributing to the widespread belief that these topics should provide the main focus of early conversations about teaching. Recently some researchers have begun to describe and analyze what novices and experienced teachers actually talk about. These studies provide a more refined picture of the intellectual work of guided practice.

Based on an analysis of talk in weekly, school-based meetings, among student teachers, cooperating teachers, and university supervisors, Cochran-Smith (1990) identifies five types of intellectual work. Her categories—rethinking language, posing problems, constructing curriculum, giving reasons to cases, confronting dilemmas—capture the intersection of form and content in serious thought and talk about teaching. Noting that classroom management was only one of several topics explored, Cochran-Smith enumerates other topics (some general and some specific) that surfaced in these conversations among educators, including individual children, child development, the cultures of schools and classrooms, and issues of race, gender, and class.

Besides learning what guides and teachers *actually* talk about in a given context, we can also frame normative and practical questions about the substantive focus of guided practice. What should guides talk about with teachers at different career stages? Who should set the substantive agenda? How can guides balance attention to teachers' emergent concerns and, at the same time, stretch their thinking to include broader or related issues? Knowing more about how thoughtful guides think about and manage such dilemmas in the specific contexts of their work would enlarge our understanding of this important professional work.

Probing the forms and content of guided practice also leads to questions about the influence of goals, underlying beliefs and context. For instance, do guides who view professional knowledge as a set of discrete techniques and strategies tell teachers what to do more often than guides who construe professional knowledge as a form of situated knowing-in-action? When preservice teachers participate in programs where observation and co-planning are the norm, do they tend to seek such professional learning opportunities on-the-job? How do broad program goals translate into particular forms of guided practice?

Contexts

Guided practice does not occur in a vacuum. Its character and quality are shaped by the contexts in which it takes place—the classroom, school, program, community, and larger culture. These contexts may influence the guide's goals, underlying beliefs, role expectations and practices. Whether and how contexts constrain or support serious forms of guided practice is an important empirical question with consequences for the improvement of teaching and teacher education.

When Feiman-Nemser and Parker (1994) compared the perspectives and practices of mentor teachers in two beginning teacher assistance programs, they found striking differences which they linked to differences in the contexts. In one setting, mentors functioned as "local guides," explaining local policies and programs, giving advice, and helping novices survive their first year of teaching. In the other setting, mentors functioned as "educational companions." Helping novices cope with immediate problems, they kept their eye on broader professional goals, encouraging beginning teachers to study children's thinking and adopt an analytic stance toward their teaching. In accounting for the differences, the researchers describe mentors' working conditions, role expectations, program structures, and preparation and show how these aspects of context shape mentors' practice and novices' learning opportunities.

Context looms large in studies of student teaching where the conservative influence of the school has been widely documented. Most universities have little control over the settings where student teachers are placed or the selection of cooperating teachers with whom they will work. Few cooperating teachers receive special preparation for their new role. Lacking knowledge of what student teachers have been taught in their preservice courses, cooperating teachers understandably focus on the daily demands of classroom teaching.

Some reform-oriented preservice programs try to bypass the cooperating teacher's influence by helping student teachers adopt a critical perspective toward the institutional and instructional practices they observe. A different approach is to place student teachers in contexts where experienced teachers are working hard to change their practice. Learning to teach in the company of teachers who are trying to teach differently offers concrete lessons in educational reform, as Cochran-Smith (1991) explains: "It is only in the apparent narrowness of work in particular classrooms and in the boundedness of discussions of highly contextualized instances of practice that student teachers actually have opportunities to confront the broadest themes of reform" (p. 307).

Serious forms of guided teacher learning represent a break with the prevailing structure of schools and the culture of teaching (Little, 1990). Most teachers work alone, seeking help only when they encounter some difficulty. Few teachers have the opportunity to observe their colleagues or to participate in serious and probing conversations about teaching. Guided learning in and from teaching has the potential to challenge the norms of privacy and non-interference that characterize the culture of teaching and to promote the value of discourse about teaching. Whether this occurs and what it depends on is an important empirical question.

Guided learning in teaching may also be influenced by the philosophy or structure of the program within which it is embedded.

For example, Rosaen worked in a preservice program organized around the notion of teaching for conceptual change. Coursework and field assignments focused on helping prospective teachers learn about children's prior knowledge and skills in specific subject matter areas so they could figure out appropriate and meaningful ways to structure and represent subject matter that would support children in constructing new knowledge. In this preservice program, student teachers worked with field instructors and mentor teachers who were supposed to help them use program concepts and themes in their daily teaching as well as to reflect on their practice. In studying the practice of mentor teachers and field instructors, Roth, Rosaen, and Lanier (1988) found that classrooms where mentors understood program concepts and modeled them in their practice were more fruitful contexts for supporting student teachers' learning. Moreover, program concepts and themes as they relate to planning and teaching in the mentor's classroom were a consistent focus in conversations between field instructors and student teachers, whereas issues of classroom management, individual student problems, and daily lesson planning tended to be left to mentors.

Conceptual Underpinnings

Finally, guided learning in teaching is informed by the beliefs that guides bring to their work. Research on teacher thinking (e.g., Clark & Peterson, 1986) underscores the important role that prior knowledge and beliefs play in shaping teachers' goals, perceptions, interpretations, and practices. The same holds true in guided practice. Of special interest here are underlying beliefs about teaching and learning to teach and how they influence (and are influenced by) what guides see and do.

Writing about her advisory work with teachers, Maja Apelman (1986) explains how her personal beliefs influence what she sees and does:

> I bring with me my practical experience and my theoretical knowledge about teaching and learning. What I notice and pay attention to will be determined to a large degree by what I believe constitutes a good life for young children in school. I may look at a classroom without a specific plan, but what I see is organized and analyzed according to my personal beliefs (p. 117).

In working with George, a follow-through kindergarten teacher in his first year of teaching, Apelman notices the atmosphere of busy involvement, the sensible room arrangement, the wide range of available materials—all features of what Apelman would define as "a good life" for children in classrooms. She also notices that George allows children to resolve their own conflicts but tends to oversee their work with materials. This leads Apelman to wonder whether George's "investment in the intellectual discoveries and learning of children is as deep as his interest in the children's interpersonal relationships" (p. 119). She resolves to help him learn that intense involvement with rich materials can also contribute to children's self concept.

A different view of good teaching informs the guided practice work of Jane Stallings (1986) whose approach combines observation of predetermined teaching skills with analysis of teacher profiles in small colleague groups. Using an observation schedule based on variables identified as critical to effective teaching, Stallings gathers data over three consecutive days in each teacher's classroom. The data yield profiles of classroom activities and teacher-student interactions and recommendations about whether teachers should try to decrease or increase particular behaviors. Stallings discusses these profiles with teachers in a series of workshops aimed at helping them learn how to "become more efficient managers and provide more effective interactional instruction" (p. 17).

Underlying beliefs about how one learns to teach may also shape different approaches. Advisory approaches which take their cue from the teacher's emergent concerns are more compatible with developmental views of learning to teach (Feiman, 1979). Apprenticeship models fit a view of teaching as a design-like practice best learned in the company of thoughtful practitioners who can demonstrate and articulate their practical knowledge (Schon, 1987). Training models are compatible with the idea that teaching can be broken into component skills which can be mastered through practice with feedback (Hunter, 1984; Showers, 1984; 1985).

Traditionally, teacher educators have attended to what teachers need to know more than how teachers learn to teach and researchers have only begun to frame and study this complex question (Carter, 1990; Feiman-Nemser and Remillard, 1996; Kagan, 1992). At the same time, programs and practices in teacher education reflect implicit views of learning to teach. Those who guide teacher learning in school settings are in a good position to study their work and contribute to a grounded theory of guided learning to teach in the context of teaching.

Using the Guided Practice Framework: Comparing Reflective and Technical Coaching

When proponents use the same label to characterize their approach to guiding teacher learning, the term ceases to convey clear meaning. For example, when educators as diverse as Madeline Hunter, Noreen Garman, and Carl Glickman all call their approach "clinical supervision," the term has no shared referent (1984). It could mean that educators have different interpretations of the same model, or it could mean that they really have in mind a different model of guided practice. Our framework can help practitioners and researchers look beneath common labels to the ideas and practices associated with different approaches.

To illustrate the use of this framework, we briefly analyze and compare two forms of guided practice which are both called "coaching." Donald Schon (1987) uses the term "reflective coaching" to describe how master practitioners induct students into design-like practices. Although he does not specifically discuss learning to teach, many educators have attempted to apply his ideas to guided practice relationships. Bruce Joyce and Beverly Showers refer to "coaching" as a necessary resource in helping teachers transfer newly acquired skills to their classroom. In both cases, the guide is called a "coach," but the relationship envisioned, the practices promoted, the goals advocated and the associated views of teaching and learning differ.

Reflective Coaching

Schon (1987) is interested in how professionals develop perceptions, judgments, and skills which allow them to manage complexities, uncertainties, and value conflicts in their work. While this practical "knowing-in-action" cannot be taught directly, it can be learned. Using the architectural studio as a model, Schon characterizes the kind of "reflective coaching" that can help novices learn ways of seeing, thinking, and acting associated with skillful and intelligent professional practice.

Goals. A peculiar paradox confronts the coach and the novice in the early stages of their work together. In order to learn, the novice must begin doing something that she doesn't really understand or know how to do. At the same time, the coach cannot tell her what she needs to learn since his explanations will probably not yet make sense, thus creating a gap in communication. While the long-term goal is to help the novice learn to practice thoughtfully and skillfully, the intermediate goal is to bridge this communication gap through a "dialogue of words and actions" (p. 163).

The participants and their relationship. The coach and the novice form an asymmetrical relationship. Hopefully the novice wants to learn what the coach knows and the coach is able and willing to share that knowledge. Building a relationship conducive to learning is central. Schon uses the term "stance" to refer to the capacities or predispositions that the coach and student bring to their relationship and that determine what can be learned. "Stance" includes attitudes and feelings as well as ways of perceiving and understanding. For example, if the master feels the need to protect his expertise and withholds what he knows or the novice feels awed by the master's artistry or responds defensively, they may both prevent themselves from learning anything new. If, on the other hand, the student is willing to jump in without knowing exactly what she is doing and can manage the feelings of loss of control, incompetence, vulnerability that follow, and the coach can handle the student's dependency and is willing to adjust his telling and showing to the student's present know-how and understanding, learning can occur.

The practice: a dialogue of words and actions. Schon conceptualizes the dialogue between the coach and the student as an "experiment in communication." He talks about a three-fold coaching task. First, the coach must communicate about the substantive problems involved in the work. Second, he must particularize his demonstrations and descriptions so that they address the student's confusions, questions, and potential. Third, he must foster a relationship that is open to inquiry. The student's job is to construct and test her understanding of what she sees and hears.

In their dialogue, coach and student convey messages to each other not only, or even primarily, in words but also in the medium of performance. The student tries to do what she seeks to learn and thereby reveals what she understands or misunderstands. The coach responds with advice, criticism, explanations, and descriptions, but also with further performances of his own.

> When the dialogue works well, it takes the form of reciprocal reflection-in-action. The student reflects on what she hears the coach say or sees him do and reflects also on the knowing-in-action in her own performance. And the coach, in turn, asks himself what this student reveals in the way of knowledge, ignorance, or difficulty and what sorts of responses might help her (p. 163).

Schon identifies three idealized approaches to coaching—"joint experimentation," "Follow me!" and "hall of mirrors." Each approach calls for a different sort of improvisation, presents unique difficulties and suits different circumstances. In joint experimentation, the coach helps the student identify the qualities that he or she wants to achieve and then, by demonstration and description, explores different ways to do that. In "Follow me!" the coach provides a holistic image of a performance, analyzes it in terms of its component parts, and then reassembles the various pieces into a whole performance again. In "hall of mirrors," coach and student recreate in their interaction the kinds of patterns that characterize professional interactions outside the practicum in the world of work.

Schon breaks the dialogue down into specific processes and subprocesses. He considers the complexities of imitation, for example, and lists the many forms of telling. He also shows how the basic processes of telling/listening and demonstrating/imitating complement each other, each one filling in gaps of meaning produced by the other. Throughout, Schon illustrates his conceptualizations through cases of successful and unsuccessful coaching in several fields, including architecture, psychotherapy, music, and counseling.

Context. The context for reflective coaching is a practicum, a setting designed for the purpose of learning a practice. The practicum approximates the world of practice, but it allows students to experiment under low-risk conditions, to vary the pace of their work, to do things over again. Students undertake projects that simulate and simplify practice or they take on real-world projects under supervision. The practicum is a "virtual world," free from the pressures, distractions, and risks of the real world. In a sense, it stands between the university and the world of practice.

Conceptual underpinnings. Schon's ideas rest on a conception of professional practice and practical knowledge as well as a view of how "knowing-in-action" develops. Professionals regularly face problematic situations characterized by uncertainty, uniqueness, and value conflict. They must impose some coherence on these situations by framing problems that can be addressed and by inventing appropriate responses. In dealing with these "divergent" situations, practitioners develop tacit understandings and ways of thinking and acting. Developing this tacit knowledge is less like learning to apply known principles and strategies to familiar problems and more like learning to engage in reflective conversations with problematic situations in order to figure out what to do. Because teaching, like other design-like practices, is a holistic skill, it cannot be learned in a molecular way since "the pieces tend to interact with one another and derive their meanings and characters from the whole process in which they are embedded" (p. 158). It follows that learning to teach, like learning to design buildings or do psychotherapy or make music, depends on protected opportunities to engage in the actual work under the guidance of a skilled practitioner who can both demonstrate and describe the complexities of his work.

Technical Coaching

Joyce and Showers borrow the term "coaching" from athletics and research on the transfer of training and use it to refer to the "next step" in the training process. Drawing on their own empirical work and an extensive meta-analysis of the literature on training and staff development, the researchers claim that "the coaching process enables nearly all teachers to sustain practice and gain executive control over a large range of curricular and instructional practices" (1981, p. 86).

Goals. Joyce and Showers link coaching with several outcomes. First, coaching is a necessary follow up to training, helping teachers to transfer new skills to the classroom. While teachers can "fine tune" existing skills on their own, if they want to master strategies that differ from their customary practices, they need a coach to help them learn how to use the new skills and strategies appropriately in context. "Teachers are likely to keep and use new strategies and concepts if they receive coaching (either expert or peer) while they are trying the new ideas in their classroom" (Showers, Joyce & Bennett, 1987, p. 80). When coaching is carried out by teachers for teachers, it can become a vehicle for building a professional learning community. Besides fostering new norms, it provides a vocabulary and a focus for collegial study of new knowledge and skills. "Coaching is as much a communal activity, a relationship among seeking professionals, as it is the exercise of a set of skills and a vital component of training" (Showers, 1985, p. 43-44).

The coaching relationship. Joyce and Showers do not link effective coaching to particular role incumbents. Administrators, teachers, trainers, and university supervisors can all function as coaches; however, they are especially interested in promoting the practice of teachers coaching one another. In a peer coaching relationship, participants form a reciprocal relationship, taking turns playing the roles of coach and teacher. Successful peer coaching probably depends on certain dispositions—an openness to scrutiny, a willingness to take risks with colleagues, a willingness to experiment. Joyce and Showers mention some personal qualities associated with successful transfer (e.g., enthusiasm for the innovation, high conceptual level); however, they argue that well-designed training is more important than personal characteristics. "Personal motivation to grow does affect response to training, although it does not suffice for adequately designed training" (Showers, Joyce & Bennett, 1987, p. 83).

The process of coaching. Technical coaching is "a cyclical process designed as an extension of training." Effective training provides an opportunity for teachers to (a) study the rationale of the new skills, (b) see them demonstrated, (c) practice the skills, and (d) get feedback on their performance. Once teachers understand the rationale and can perform the new skills, they are ready to concentrate on transferring these skills to their classroom and incorporating them into their teaching repertoire. Here is where coaching comes in. At first, the coach focuses on increasing the teacher's skill with the new strategy. The coach checks the teacher's performance against an "expert model of behavior," recording the presence or absence of specific behaviors on a clinical assessment form. The form helps insure that feedback will be "accurate, specific, and nonevaluative." As the teacher masters the "interactive moves" associated with the new strategy, the focus shifts from a concern with performance to a concern with the appropriate use of the strategy. This is the more difficult task. The coach helps the teacher analyze curricular materials to determine how the new strategy could be incorporated, hypothesize about students' likely responses to the material, and design lessons around the strategy. The teacher experiments with the strategy and the coach observes and provides feedback. In this second phase of coaching, the relationship of coach and teacher changes as the process shifts from giving and receiving technical assistance to joint inquiry:

> As the process shifts to this second set of emphases, coaching conferences take on the character of collaborative problem-solving sessions which often conclude with joint planning of lessons the team will experiment with. (Showers, 1985, p.44)

Joyce and Showers recommend that, in peer coaching situations, training for coaching be folded into initial skills training so that teachers not only learn the new teaching skills, but also learn how to give each other feedback on their performance. After viewing and participating in multiple demonstrations of the new teaching strategy and the feedback process, teachers prepare lessons for their peers and present them to a partner. Then several pairs form a peer teaching group with partners providing feedback on each other's lessons. Trainers monitor the teaching and feedback process during peer teaching and provide additional demonstrations as necessary.

The context of coaching. Joyce and Showers have more to say about the context of training than the context of coaching. It seems clear, however, that peer coaching will not succeed in a school unless teachers have administrative support, adequate time and resources to learn to participate in this kind of collegial activity.

Conceptual foundations. Joyce and Showers have no trouble breaking teaching into discrete skills and strategies which can be mastered through training and adapted to particular contexts through coaching. While their focus is on performance, the researchers appreciate that "the major dimension of teaching skill is cognitive in nature" (Showers, Joyce & Bennett, 1985, p. 85). An essential component of effective training is presenting the rationale of a new skill or strategy. Successful coaching should help teachers learn to judge when and how to use that skill or strategy. By promoting a linear model of skills training followed by coaching, Joyce and Showers imply that learning new teaching strategies is a linear process. At the same time, they acknowledge that the boundaries separating the acquisition of knowledge, skill, and judgment blur in use.

Comparative Analysis

Using our framework to compare reflective coaching and technical coaching highlights practical and conceptual differences in the two approaches. In trying to determine what each approach has to say about individual elements in the framework, we not only see how the elements interact, we also learn which elements receive explicit attention in each approach.

Schon envisions the coaching relationship as one between a master practitioner and a novice; Joyce and Showers envision coaching as an activity that can just as easily occur between and among peers of varying experience and expertise. To some extent, this difference stems from the fact that Schon is concerned with professional preparation and induction, whereas Joyce and Showers aim their sights at staff development for experienced teachers.

Schon is interested in the "art" of coaching; Joyce and Showers have turned coaching into a technology. Schon conceptualizes different strategies and analyzes the component processes that make up the coaching dialogue. He emphasizes the role of improvisation and strategic thinking in reflective coaching, and provides guidelines to help coaches and students get out of learning binds that arise from problems in the relationship. Joyce and Showers reduce the complexity of technical coaching by the use of clinical assessment forms. These forms help peer coaches focus on the salient features of the new skill or strategy being learned.

Schon would probably say that reflective coaching and technical coaching rest on different "epistemologies of practice." Joyce and Showers believe that teaching can be broken into skills and strategies which can be mastered through training and transferred through coaching. Better teaching will result from the application of new models and strategies devised by others for use by teachers. As Joyce and Showers characterize it, the process of mastery and transfer is linear and fairly straightforward.

Schon focuses on the "indeterminate zones of practice," situations of uncertainty, value conflict, and uniqueness that are increasingly recognized as a central part of professional practice. Such situations do not lend themselves to technical problem solving. They require something quite different, a kind of tacit "knowing-in-action" developed through reflection in and on the situation.

Using the Framework to Study Guided Practice

Guided learning in teaching is a professional activity directed toward helping teachers learn to teach and learn from teaching. Thus it makes sense to ask what teachers are learning through this work and whether that learning is productive and worthwhile. One goal in our course was to help students consider the educative potential of this form of professional development and to frame some criteria for determining whether a given episode or encounter may or may not be promoting worthwhile learning. To that end, we studied Dewey's (1938) concept of an "educative experience" and explored how it could be used in conjunction with our framework to describe and appraise particular instances of guided learning in teaching.

Developing a Normative Stance

For Dewey, an experience is a transaction between an individual and an environment. The individual brings needs, desires, internal capacities and purposes—what Dewey calls "internal conditions." The environment consists of those aspects of the external situation (the "objective conditions") that interact with the person's internal conditions to create the experience which is had. These objective conditions include what the educator says, the tone of voice used, the materials available and the social situation. In guided learning to teach, internal conditions include the qualities of mind and heart that teachers bring to the situation. Guides can regulate some objective conditions, such as how the relationship unfolds, short-term and long-term goals and the actual practices. Other objective conditions such as the guide's formal role obligations or the professional norms in the school may not be under the guide's direct control.

What distinguishes an educative from a miseducative experience? The extent to which the experience not only engages the person in the present (Dewey's principle of interaction), but also contributes to the formation of attitudes, habits and desires conducive to further learning (Dewey's principle of continuity). "Continuity and interactions in their active union with each other provide the measure of the educative significance and value of the experience" (pp. 44-45). To create educative experiences, the guide must take the learner's internal conditions into account in shaping the objective conditions, always being mindful of how the immediate experience will influence future learning as Dewey (1938) observes, "The most important attitude that can be formed is that of desire to go on learning" (p. 48).

The Educative Potential of Guided Practice

Apelman's advisory work (1980) with Heather, an experienced teacher, provides a rich picture of guided practice work and of how a guide is thinking about that work.[2] Applying Dewey's concept of an educative experience to this case stimulates us to ask whether Apelman promoted worthwhile learning for Heather. Although Apelman and Heather met before in a math workshop, their classroom work began several years later when Apelman invited Heather to take her course, "Discussions About Teaching."[3] The course focused on curriculum content: "how to choose, develop and organize appropriate subject matter for children of different ages and how to extend and evaluate the learning that arises from it" (p. 2). In addition, Apelman visited Heather's classroom on a regular basis once Heather indicated her interest in trying "new things and ideas and a different way of approaching children" (p.4).

Unlike her colleagues at school, Heather was frustrated with her structured "centers," but did not have the knowledge and skill to create a more open and individualized classroom environment. Nor did she know how to facilitate children's learning within such an environment. Apelman's first visit to Heather's classroom was exploratory:

> I had no agenda for my first visit to Heather's classroom, which took place in January. I went to see what her school and her classroom were like. I wanted to get a feel for her teaching style, see her interact with children, and get some idea of her curriculum (p. 3).

In talking with Heather after the visit and reflecting on what seemed to be Heather's foremost concern, Apelman wrote in her diary about the first topic she would work on with Heather—control in an informal setting. This led to conversations and experiments with new ways to organize the classroom and new routines that would afford children greater freedom and control. When Heather mentioned that she did not have enough materials in her classroom for children who loved to build, Apelman helped her borrow some from another teacher. When Apelman noticed that children had limited access to the painting area, she helped Heather rearrange the materials and reorganize routines so children were more responsible for cleaning up. When the new blocks were enthusiastically received but created too much congestion in the classroom, Apelman helped Heather rearrange them. When Heather raised the concern that she did not know how to organize small group activities with just one teacher in the room, Apelman proposed other approaches to Heather. As her visits proceeded, Apelman shifted her focus to helping Heather enrich the learning opportunities in the room:

> I realized that organization and control would remain major topics for a long time to come and I wanted to start talking about materials, how children were using them, and how greater involvement with materials would diminish what Heather called the chaos of her activity (p. 8).

Apelman suggested that a small group trip to the airport might give some boys richer content for their play in the block corner. She also worked directly with children in the classroom while Heather observed, and she encouraged Heather to try some of the classroom activities at home so she would understand more fully the experiences the children were having and the potential of the materials and activities to promote different learnings. Apelman seemed to base her decisions about what to do with Heather on what Heather said she wanted or needed, on her own interpretations of Heather's current knowledge and skill in teaching, and her own ideas of what a good open classroom should look like.

As they engaged in these collaborative activities, Apelman noted that Heather placed a great deal of trust in her. She attributed this to her willingness to lend a helping hand with children, materials, or organization wherever it is needed, and her habit of sharing her observations and giving advice sparingly. Above all, she felt her deep feelings of respect for teachers to engage seriously in improving their practice must have come across to Heather. By the end of the school year, Heather had made several changes in her classroom and curriculum and had also had opportunities to share her learning with a colleague. Both teachers planned to take a summer workshop that would focus on new materials and activities as well as developing a deeper understanding of children.

Appraising Apelman's work with Heather. It was clear to us as we read this case that Heather's classroom underwent several changes, that children were spending their time differently than they had before, and that Heather had done a great deal of thinking about her teaching across these several months. We did not have enough information to evaluate the extent to which the changes implemented actually led to improved learning for children (This was not Apelman's focus in writing about her work.). We were persuaded, however, that Heather got support in heading toward her immediate goal of trying new ideas and a different way of approaching children, and that she did, in fact, enact some new approaches.

Applying Dewey's concept of an educative experience to Heather's potential learning impelled us to consider teacher learning and change from a broader perspective. For example, we considered whether, taken as a whole, Apelman's work fostered in Heather a desire to go on learning. To what extent did Heather develop attitudes, habits, and desires conducive to further learning? These are intriguing questions that cannot be answered fully with the information provided in the case. Nevertheless, they do invite exploration. One could argue that Apelman very much shaped her relationship with Heather, her practices, and her goals (the objective conditions over which she had control) around the internal conditions Heather brought to the situation. For example, Heather enrolled in Apelman's class because of her desire to change her practices and her belief that she could not undertake major changes successfully on her own. Heather felt that structured "centers" did not offer the kinds of experiences she wanted to provide for children. She was willing to examine her current practices with the help of an outsider and explore what changes might be called for. Apelman invited Heather to participate in her class because the timing seemed right, because the class created a community where Heather could experiment with changes, and because Apelman was in a position to engage in classroom-based work (modeling, analyzing, reflecting, assisting) and not just talk new approaches. Apelman knew that Heather's colleagues were not necessarily ready to change their curriculum and teaching (an objective condition she could not influence).

Still, the teachers in Apelman's class would provide a forum for exploring new approaches. One could argue that Apelman's close attention to Heather's perceived needs and her responsiveness to those needs as they arose provided well-timed and meaningful experiences for Heather that gradually supported her knowledge and skill development over time. Moreover, Apelman was willing to roll up her sleeves and work alongside Heather, doing whatever was necessary to show Heather how to implement changes in her classroom and curriculum. This collegial approach generated feelings of trust and mutual respect, creating a safe environment for supporting difficult and perhaps risky changes. Finally, Heather showed an awareness and appreciation for her own learning. She eagerly helped her colleagues make some of the same changes she had recently made, reflecting on how much she understood what they were going through, and she was willing to continue further learning and study in follow-up summer workshops.

On the other hand, one might cast the case in a more cautious light, as some of our students persuaded us to do. Impressed with Apelman's thoughtfulness and with her ability to make connections between what she saw happening with children and important curricular issues, our students wondered how much Apelman shared that intellectual work with Heather. For example, when Apelman noticed that the children's art work looked remarkably similar because of the teacher's control over the colors, she talked with Heather about how the children could mix their own colors and become more independent in their creations. What did Heather learn from this interaction? Did she take away a new way to manage painting activities with children or did she strengthen her disposition to observe children's use of curriculum materials as a basis for figuring out how to extend and enrich their learning? In the future, would Heather notice similar kinds of curricular issues arising out of classroom observations? This is an important question if an educative experience fosters appropriate capacities for further learning. Developing the capacity to pay attention to children's thinking and learning and make linkages to the curriculum materials would enable Heather to notice on her own in the future other instances to which she could respond. This would give her the power to go on learning without Apelman in her classroom. Throughout their work together Apelman had skillful, concrete, and practical ways of responding to Heather's needs. In our discussions of this case, we concluded that we needed to know more about what Heather will do with what she learned in her future teaching practices and her work with her colleagues before we could conclude definitively that her experiences with Apelman were educative.

Describing and Appraising Instances of Guided Learning in Teaching

To complement our class discussions, we created an occasion for students to use the framework and various normative perspectives to study an instance of guided teacher learning. The situations they studied ranged across different career stages and contexts, including field instructors working with student teachers and curriculum-based projects in professional development schools. The framework was used as a descriptive and analytic tool to guide data collection and to shape data analysis. For example, students were asked to describe what participants talked about, who set the agenda, and how the conversation(s) unfolded. They also considered the guide's stated goals, whether or how those goals emerged, and how they shaped the interactions. They characterized the roles that each participant played and explored important factors (e.g., program goals, features of the school setting, the guide's beliefs about teaching and/or learning to teach, etc.) that seemed to influence what they observed. Connections between and among various dimensions of the framework were also drawn (e.g., between role definition and practices; between intentions and actions; and between views of teaching and the content and processes of the work). The analysis led to a consideration of one or more central themes, tensions, issues, or questions about some aspect of the work, enabling students to stand back and see what they could learn about the work from careful study of one instance of the work.

The cases that follow were developed by our doctoral students out of the studies they conducted in our course. They are rich examples of what can be learned not from looking at the work of guiding teacher learning as the implementation of a particular model or approach, but from using a broader conceptual framework to understand what the work itself is like and what themes, tensions, issues, or questions it raises. In the first case, "Constructing a Practice: How an Educational Vision Shapes the Work of a Field Instructor and her Teacher Candidates," Jenny Denyer describes how her work with preservice teachers is influenced by the philosophy of her preservice program. The second case, "Louise and Me," by Sharon Schwille, highlights the improvisational nature of supervisory practice by showing how Schwille draws on beliefs about good teaching to respond to what she perceives as the emergent needs of her student teacher. In the third case, "Dilemmas of a Field Instructor: A Search for Common Ground," Jaime Grinberg, Deborah Harris, and Michelle Parker raise issues, tensions and dilemmas endemic to the university supervisor's role. "Learning from Experience," written with our help, by Nancy Jennings and Kathleen Peasley, portrays a university professor's work with experienced teachers in a professional development school. This case highlights the influence of context and the advantages, problems and difficulties a guide confronts in managing multiple agendas.

Endnotes

[1] We are grateful to Tom Bird for introducing us to the idea of facet statements.

[2] The Mountain View Center for Environmental Education, a teacher center formerly affiliated with the University of Colorado, offered courses, workshops, and classroom support and guidance to teachers at their request.

[3] Apelman described the course as an opportunity for teachers to meet regularly with colleagues to discuss larger issues in education and an opportunity for her to learn more about the teachers' classrooms and teaching problems. She also hoped that teachers would develop an informal network where they could support teach other in developing and testing new ideas about curriculum and teaching.

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Constructing a Practice: How an Educational Vision Shapes the Work of a Field Instructor and Her Teacher Candidates

Jenny Denyer

University-based teacher educators work with teacher candidates in the field in various ways. Generally this work involves observing the teacher candidates and then having a conversation with them about what has been observed. That is a very large part of what I do as a field instructor working with preservice teachers. I observe my students as they work with children in elementary classrooms, and then meet with them to talk about that work. These observations and conversations have a particularly distinctive character because of the programmatic context of the teacher education program in which my students and I interact. The philosophy and goals of the Learning Community Teacher Education Program at Michigan State University shape these interactions. They create an intellectual context in which the students and staff learn about teaching and learning to teach. The following is an account of how this philosophy and the program's goals work together to create a context which has a profound effect on the way I construct my practice and develop a set of moves in my interactions with two teacher candidates, Maureen and Diane.

The Learning Community Program

The Learning Community Elementary Teacher Education Program at Michigan State University is committed to preparing teachers who will teach subject matter effectively while also developing personal and social responsibility among students. The program encourages its teacher candidates to create classroom learning environments where cooperation and collaboration are valued as teachers and students engage in the teaching and learning of school subjects, and work to become responsible community members within and beyond the classroom. Based on the writing of Joseph Schwab (1976), the philosophy of this program is articulated in a list of propensities—specific dispositions to thought and action. These propensities describe certain perspectives toward the school curriculum, the learning environment, personal and social responsibility, and critical thinking that we encourage our students to develop as they learn to teach. For example, as teacher candidates plan for instruction, we encourage them to integrate subject matters wherever possible and to use the school and community as resources in their instruction. We encourage our teacher candidates to establish interactive learning environments in which student diversity is valued and encouraged as teachers and students engage in discourse and work toward shared understandings. We also want our students to learn to discuss and think critically about their own practice as teachers. Maureen, Diane, and I share a common commitment to the philosophy of our program as stated in these propensities. Because Maureen and Diane are in the second term of their professional studies, these propensities are still somewhat abstract and vague for them, but they are developing their understanding of how these propensities can shape their work with children.

The Literacy Sequence

I serve as instructor for the first course in an integrated four-course literacy sequence that treats reading, writing, listening, and speaking holistically. My course specifically encourages teacher candidates to look closely at their own literacy learning, the literacy learning of a small group of children with whom they have six opportunities to work during the term, and the role that children's literature can and should play in literacy learning and instruction in schools. Additionally, this course strives to help candidates begin to move away from thinking of teaching as telling, assessing, and managing, and to develop an image of teaching as careful listening and thoughtful ways that support students' development as literacy learners. To this end, we spend a good deal of time thinking and talking about how we could learn to have conversations with children about literature. The shared experience of the course and our joint commitment to the learning community philosophy influences the ways in which I work with Maureen and Diane. These influencing factors—our underlying beliefs and contextual factors—will affect not only my observations of their work with children in their field experiences, but also the conversations we will have about those observations as I step out of my role as course instructor and into the role of field instructor.

Field Instruction

The term "field instructor" has been consciously chosen to describe the work of university-based teacher educators in the Learning Community Program who observe and talk with teacher candidates about their work with children in elementary classrooms. The word "instructor" is key because we see our role as just that—a person who will engage in instruction in the field, a person who will teach our teacher candidates about teaching, a person who will learn from teaching. We do not see ourselves primarily as supervisors who observe and evaluate the actions of teacher candidates, pointing out what needs to be changed and offering suggestions on how to make those changes, although that is part of our role. We are there to help our teacher candidates think carefully about their own practice and to find ways to improve it. We are there to provide a series of scaffolded learning experiences as teacher candidates engage in the complex task of learning to teach. We do this in a variety of ways that might include asking questions, modeling, instructing, role playing, choosing those strategies carefully in order to support the growth and development of our teacher candidates. The episode described and analyzed below illustrates how this programmatic context, with its philosophy articulated in a set of propensities, its particular vision of literacy learning and instruction, and its particular stance toward working with teacher candidates in field experiences, influences the way I construct my practice and the moves I make as I work with teacher candidates.

An Instance of Guided Practice

The Observation

On the day I observed Maureen and Diane, I arrived in their first grade classroom as Ms. Lawrence, their cooperating teacher, was finishing up a math lesson in which the children were working in small groups on the floor. After clean-up, she took the children to recess and I had about 10 minutes to talk with Maureen and Diane before they were to meet with their writing groups, which I had to come to watch. Loudly and clearly, both teacher candidates expressed great frustration at what had transpired so far. They talked about the "new group" they had been given that morning and how their 45-minute lesson had been disastrous because the children had been "bouncing off the walls." They commented that the students had been very inattentive all morning, and that even Ms. Lawrence had a difficult time during math. Added to this, Diane had read *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* to the children and even that had not gone well. Neither Maureen nor Diane was looking forward to writing time because they were not sure what to expect. When they had finished telling me about their morning, the children returned from recess and Maureen and Diane took their small groups of six children each to the library for their 45-minute writing workshop.

Diane's group began with Jason sharing his story from the author's chair. Several children told some personal narratives that related to Jason's ideas. Diane and her students then moved around one of the library tables to begin their writing. Two students were having a difficult time deciding what to write, so Diane asked them some questions about pictures they had drawn earlier to see if that might spark some writing. The students decided to draw more pictures, so Diane started to write her own story about skiing. One girl asked why she was writing about that and Diane replied that she liked to ski. That child decided to write about the dentist, another asked if he could write three stories, another still had not found a topic, and another asked if he could write about the Los Angeles Lakers. The period continued with Diane and students talking, writing, and drawing.

Maureen began her writing time by telling students they would have a chance to finish sharing their stories. One child said he did not want to read his. Maureen acknowledged his comment and then proceeded to review what they had done during their last sharing time. The children said they clapped, asked questions, made comments, and added sentences. One student then shared her story from the author's chair. Since there were no comments or questions, students and Maureen went back to their table to continue writing. Maureen talked with one student about the letter she was writing to the book character, Alexander. Another student, a girl who had been absent when the book had been read to the group, read *Little Sister for Sale*. The other children wrote until the end of the period.

Setting the Conference Agenda

As I prepared for my conference with Maureen and Diane, I was most concerned about the frustration that these teacher candidates had expressed so vociferously. Immediately after my observation, I had asked them what they thought about their writing groups. Both said they felt fairly good about the sessions, but quickly returned to how frustrating the rest of the morning had been. It seemed important for me to understand exactly what had been so frustrating. At that point, I was not sure what they were learning or how they were understanding what they were experiencing and observing.

With this in mind, I decided to open the conference with a very general invitation, "Tell me what you are thinking about yesterday." One of our program's propensities describes the importance of teachers developing the ability to discuss and think critically about their practice. This seemed to be an excellent opportunity to put this propensity into action. If Maureen and Diane had thought through the previous day's events and had come to an understanding of what had been frustrating and why, they would have an opportunity to articulate their thinking as they responded to my question. If they had not been able to do that, this opening would have the potential to get us started in a conversation in which we could explore what had happened and try to make sense of it together.

In either case, it seemed to me that Maureen and Diane's responses to this opening would provide me with an opportunity to ask some genuine questions, not only about the events of the morning, but also about how they were perceiving those events. It was very important to me that I get a window on their thinking in order to understand how they were making sense of these experiences. I was concerned about attending to what Dewey calls the "mental life" of my students. In a 1904 essay, which has had tremendous impact on my thinking about my practice as a teacher educator, Dewey stresses that if teachers are to support the growth of their pupils, they must be students of their pupils' "mind-activity." By opening the conference in this manner, I felt I could gain some insight into that mind activity, and would then be in a better position to make some decisions about how to support and extend the learning of these teacher candidates.

During the conference, Maureen and Diane expressed concern about a number of problematic situations that they were encountering. They seemed to be struggling to understand what it means to become a learning community teacher as they attempted to put into practice what they had been learning about literacy learning and instruction and the program's propensities. My role as field instructor was to help them make sense of their confusion and frustration as together we discussed and thought critically about their teaching practice.

The Conference

Raising Questions. In this conference, one way that Maureen and Diane tried to understand what it means to be a learning community teacher was by asking questions. After having read ***Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*** to the whole class, Diane seemed to be struggling with how to deal with more than one "conversational floor" (Schultz, Florio, & Erickson, 1982). She had been learning in her literacy courses that it is important to share literature with children and to encourage them to talk about the text, possibly by relating it to their personal experiences. Diane had also been learning about the importance of listening to what children say and to take their ideas seriously as she works to understand them as learners. Yet, when she tried this with her whole class, it raised some questions:

> We read Alexander yesterday, and then they talked. When they're talking, the other kids are just talking, and they're not, you know, listening. But I don't know, we just wanted to know—how do we know when the other kids are listening, or how, you know, is that important?

I wanted to use this dilemma, not to talk about how to discipline these students, but rather to think about what happens when you actually engage children in talk about text. I wanted to help them focus on the content of the children's talk rather than on the fact that the children had been talking when Diane and Maureen thought they should have been quiet. This issue was not new; we had spent much time discussing it in my literacy course. Still, this situation was the first time that Maureen and Diane had occasion to think about having conversations with a whole class of children rather than a small group. I asked:

> What's your sense, are they talking, like if I'm talking about my story and other people here are sitting and talking, do those people talk about my story to me or to you or to anybody?

Diane wasn't sure, so Maureen offered that she had observed students telling their own personal stories and that it was at this point that the other children got distracted and started talking to their neighbors about "whatever [in] their memory was sparked." She shared Diane's concern because she did not want to keep asking the children to be quiet. Diane agreed that she did not want them all sitting quietly, but she felt that they needed to listen to each other.

In an effort to place their concerns within the program's context, and to offer some possible ways to manage this dilemma, I referred to one of the program's propensities, "to acknowledge and appreciate student diversity," and tried to relate it to what Maureen and Diane were doing during their writing group sessions:

> One of our propensities is to appreciate diversity within a classroom . . . and part of that might relate to, "Well, if I listen to my classmates, then I can begin to appreciate, what's different about them, how we're alike". . . I think we can do some things like, you know, I need everyone to listen. You all have some important things to say. So-and-so is trying [to] tell us about whatever it might be. Or, Sarah has something really important she'd like to say and then if you have something to add, or if you'd like to ask Sarah a question. I mean there are some things that you could do.

By making reference to one of the propensities, I was hoping to help Maureen and Diane think about ways they could manage the dilemma they were facing by drawing on these guiding principles. Because these teacher candidates are in the very early stages of their professional preparation and are only beginning to think about these propensities as they relate to real classrooms, I felt it important to seize the opportunity to show Maureen and Diane how a teacher might actually use these propensities to think about her work with children. It also seemed important to help them see that they did draw on this propensity in their work with their small writing groups.

Maureen picked up on this connection and said she could say those things with her small group, but working with the whole class was more intimidating. Diane agreed and referred to her small group lesson where the children made lots of comments about the story Jason shared in author's chair. She said how pleased she was about that:

> [But] it didn't work when I read that book. I don't know, it was chaos before one person said, "I don't like it when my brother pulls my hair," then I had six people telling me about pulling hair.

At this point, I pointed out, "That tells us, then, that they are listening. I mean, they've heard what that person has said." This seemed to answer her earlier question about when you know your kids are listening, but there was no uptake on this point. Maureen returned to the paradox of wanting the children to listen and to able to talk.

Trying another approach, I asked Maureen and Diane if there might not be some way that they could both encourage children to share the ideas and listen to their ideas of their classmates. Maureen said she had been thinking about how she might give the children a few minutes to share their ideas with a neighbor, and then come together to talk about those ideas as a whole group. I encouraged her to try this idea because it seemed to have the potential of helping her deal with both aspects of the frustration she and Diane were expressing.

As Maureen and Diane raised questions, I attempted to engage them in exploring those questions rather than assuming the role of expert who holds the knowledge to be dispensed. I asked specific questions to further clarify for me and for them exactly what they were confused and wondering about. These questions initially led us to look closely at their students, but Maureen and Diane returned to their initial question. By making references to one of the program's propensities, I tried to help these teacher candidates consider how the propensities might help us think about the situation. Again, however, we came back to Maureen and Diane's original question. Finally, when I asked a question that moved us to thinking about what *could be*, Maureen was able to offer a possible course of action.

Maureen's idea was particularly important because it seemed to emerge from her careful consideration of both her coursework and her field experience. She was thinking about how she could best support her students' literacy learning while at the same time considering how best to manage a potentially problematic situation. Our conversation had become a place where she could hypothesize about the possibilities of practice that she saw emerging. In short, Maureen was critically examining her practice to find ways in which it could be improved, another of the program's propensities. I should have made this point explicit in case it was not evident to Maureen or to Diane.

The learning is hard. During this conference, Maureen and Diane also articulated their struggles by talking about how hard it is to learn to teach.

> Maureen: I know we're supposed to be risk takers, but it's so hard sometimes to take risks 'cause you don't know. And even if, thinking of all the years that Ms. Lawrence has had in teaching, all her experience she has had, every day that we're in there, I see her learning something about a better way to teach or about what not to do next time.

At this point, I made little response to these statements except to affirm that taking risks, another of the program's propensities, is indeed a difficult thing to do. Later in the conference, however, this topic came up again. I took a more direct approach:

> Maureen: We're just learning this and we're getting frustrated but I see Ms. Lawrence getting frustrated, because she's always trying out new things.... And if we're gonna be good teachers we're gonna feel a little bit of confusion. There has to be confusion all the time . . .
>
> Diane: And I can't handle that, I'm serious. And I'm gonna have to deal with that.
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> Maureen: It's so hard to be confused and it's so hard to say that it's okay to not understand everything and to have everything not go perfectly every time. That's hard for both of us because we want to figure it all out and we want to make all like it's supposed to be.
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> Jenny: It's interesting because when you think about when we went to school, there were right answers to things, and things were pretty clear cut. And what you're finding out now is that there aren't always those clear-cut answers and that is hard to live with because you've never had to live with that.
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> Maureen/Diane: Mmmmhmmmmmm! ! ! ! ! ! ! ! !
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> Jenny: You don't get to this point that when you are a teacher you have all the answers.
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> Maureen: That's not really a teacher, you're just not that all-knowing person up in front of those children. You're just not. It felt to me like I'm not really a teacher but I'm like a--I don't even know what to call me, but I'm with them. I don't stand out. I don't think I'm ever gonna stand out as a teacher, as I thought teachers were when I was growing up.
>
> Jenny: You said an interesting thing, that you don't think of yourself as a teacher. . . . So what are you now thinking a teacher is? How is this different?
>
> Maureen: Well, I don't know everything, that's for sure. I keep learning and learning.

Diane: A learner, that's another thing, I mean teachers are learners, that's the way I look at myself, and I always will be . . . but every time I've been a learner before I've always pushed myself and succeeded and now when I push myself and it's going wrong, I don't know, it's frustrating.

Jenny: So you don't feel the same kind of success?

Maureen: Well, what is it to measure your success on? These dumb standardized tests don't measure if you're a good teacher. And when children leave your classroom, I keep asking myself when I leave, "Did they learn? What did they learn?"

Diane: We do this reading and writing with them and I hope they're learning, but...

Jenny: But think about what you're doing with them.

Diane: Yeah, reading and writing.

Maureen: And not everything is going wrong. There are some successes and you remember that, and even with all the things we leave there and say we should have done, we do leave there with a couple of things that we say we're glad we did it that way, and you remember that.

Jenny: And all those should-have-dones get translated.

Maureen: Into action the next time around.

Jenny: Right! And not next term, but it gets translated into the next week or—

Diane: Tomorrow!

Jenny: That's right!

Maureen: We have our plans already made for tomorrow!

In this segment, Maureen and Diane talked about how hard it is not to know all the answers, how hard it is to live with uncertainty, how hard it is to be learning in ways different from how they have learned before, how hard it is to know when students are learning, and how hard it is to know what and how to teach.

I did not deny that what they identified as being hard is, indeed, just that. At one point, I affirmed that how they are coming to understand what knowledge is and what the teacher's role is in relation to knowledge is indeed quite a departure from what they have understood and believed up to this point. I did not attempt to take away this uncertainty, except to support Maureen's comment that there are successes and those successes will help them know what to do next time. I explicitly stated that what they learn today can be practiced tomorrow, which is in fact where the conversation went—to an explanation of what they would do the next day because of what they had learned from the day before. While it may be more of an implicit message here, and one that Maureen and Diane may not pick up, I was agreeing with their emerging understanding of teaching as an uncertain practice that offers the practitioner more questions than answers.

As Maureen and Diane's field instructor, I see this whole part of the conference as critical for two reasons. First, it provided Maureen and Diane with an opportunity to think out loud about how all that they are learning in their coursework and in their fieldwork is causing them to rethink what it means to be a teacher. Secondly, this segment provided me with a window on how Maureen and Diane were thinking about what it means to teach. As such, it became a touchstone to which I was able to return frequently in my subsequent conferences with them. I was able to say, "Remember back in January when you said you didn't think of yourself as a teacher. How do you see yourself now?" or "Remember when you said that you didn't know how to figure out what a student was or was not learning. How are you doing that now?"

Testing emerging images. Another way that Maureen and Diane tried to make sense of their experience during their conference was by testing out, albeit very tentatively, what they thought should be happening in their classroom. As Maureen described an incident from her writing group, she told us she was confused about what to do with a student who wanted to read during writing, while at the same time offering her image of what should be happening:

> Maureen: I did ask her, Is there anything else that you want to say to him? and she didn't right then. She wanted to read *Little Sister for Sale* that we read a couple of weeks ago. . . . She and Erin started reading together, and I didn't know what to do about that . . . so I let it go this time, but I wasn't sure if I did the right thing or not.

> They were really into this, into this book, and I thought that was good that they were practicing words and they wanted to read and they were reading literature.
>
> Jenny: What was your hesitation? What made you think that might not be what you should be doing?
>
> Maureen: I think it's the fact that I think we're supposed to be writing in our groups—producing books and seeing progress in writing. It seems like they should be writing all the time, but I don't totally agree with that. That's why I keep fighting with myself that for class purposes they should be writing, but for my mind I think they ought to be reading and writing.

A short time after this, Diane made a similar comment about students who wanted to draw:

> Diane: They just like to draw. I guess I just better accept that.
>
> Jenny: Do you have kids then who aren't doing any writing?
>
> Diane: No, they wrote like a sentence. Two of them wrote a sentence and another two wrote a couple.

In these comments, I heard Maureen and Diane struggling with two issues. They seemed to be expressing some uncertainty about the connection between reading and writing, two aspects of literacy learning that had been stressed during their first course and were being revisited during their present course. They also seemed to be trying to articulate the emerging vision of literacy learning and instruction that they were developing as they worked with these first graders. This seemed like an important place for me to step in and support their vision of literacy learning by connecting it with what they had been reading and learning about in the literacy sequence:

> Jenny: You know what I would say, is go back and look at, in both cases, with your groups, your kids who are drawing and then writing a sentence or two, and your kids who are writing but then reading and drawing and all those things. Go back and look at the Avery piece. You know that "From the First," where she talks about where kids started that kind of writing and where they ended up, and what kinds of behaviors they were exhibiting. There's also one, I don't

know if we read it or not. It's about the kindergarten teacher who decided not to use the basals and the big grey cabinet in the corner.

Maureen: That was in *Breaking Ground*. It wasn't an assigned reading for our course but one we could do.

Jenny: Seems that what you're seeing is not unusual.

Diane: No, not at this early age.

Maureen and Diane were both familiar with the course texts that I suggested as evidenced by their comments. By referring to them here, I wanted to support their thinking and actions and to give them additional warrant for their emerging understanding of what literacy learning might look like. My position as one of their literacy course instructors and their field instructor positioned me to be able to help them make these connections. In retrospect, I see that I could have and probably should have been far more explicit about those connections by talking more specifically about the readings to which I was referring. In another instance, I chose to support their emerging visions by talking explicitly about their actions and identifying something they did not yet realize they were learning about becoming a teacher of writing:

Diane: We don't know how to conference yet. We're gonna learn that next week.

Jenny: But I would venture to say that you're both doing that now.

Diane: [laughter] That's good to know.

Maureen: That's good to hear. We need positive things to hear.

Jenny: You are! You are! When you sit there and you talk with someone about their (sic) writing and you ask those questions. That's what conferencing is . . . if you have a child read their (sic) piece to you, and they read it and say, "Oh, I really like that part where . . ." or "Can you tell me more about—?" you've started to conference.

The statements that I used here to have my hypothetical conference were words I had heard Diane and Maureen say to the children.

My role as an observer allowed me to see what was happening and to share that with these teacher candidates. By finding ways to connect their work with these children to what they were learning in their literacy methods courses, I was trying to support Maureen and Diane as they were developing their understanding of what it means to teach writing.

One Approach to Guiding Preservice Teacher Learning

While this observation of Maureen and Diane and our subsequent conference comprise only one instance of our joint work, in some very important ways it represents what we do together. The guided practice framework (Feiman-Nemser & Rosaen, this volume) helped me to see how the underlying views of teaching and learning to teach, as articulated by the Learning Community Program, not only shape my goals, but also influence the ways in which I choose to work toward those goals. I want these teacher candidates to develop the propensities or dispositions to thought and action that the program sees as central to good teaching. I also want them to come to understand how the subject matters they teach and the ways in which they approach that content can be shaped by those same propensities, as well as by what they have been learning in their literacy methods courses.

The programmatic context also shapes the ways in which I choose to work with my teacher candidates. In the Learning Community Program, we want our students to learn to create classroom learning communities with the children whom they will teach; however, we do not expect that this will just happen. As course and field instructors, we work to develop our own learning communities with our teacher candidates as a way of modeling how such environments are established among professionals interested in thinking critically about their work in order to improve it. We try to make visible one of our propensities—that teachers must reflect on their work in collaboration with their colleagues as they strive to create meaningful learning experiences for their students.

To this end, I strive to engage with my students in an exploration of their own questions about teaching, to engage with them in a collaborative inquiry about learning to teach as we reflect on what they have been doing and thinking and imagine the possibilities for future thought and action. Sometimes I ask them questions to clarify for them or myself what they are wondering about. At other times, I explicitly make connections between what they are wondering about and the program's philosophy. For example, we talk about what it means to appreciate diversity within a classroom, and we talk about how difficult it is to be a teacher who takes risks in her teaching.

At still other times, I try to help them see connections between their questions and what they have been learning through their course work about the possibilities that exist for literacy instruction. I refer them to specific literature that we have read in class to help them think about how children develop as young authors and about the connections between reading and writing. I also try to reframe some of their concerns about managing instruction by encouraging them to take a holistic view of instruction and by relating managerial decisions to pedagogy. For example, instead of talking about how to keep children quiet during storytime, we talked about the importance of encouraging children to share their personal responses to literature and thought about the ways they could do that and still listen to the story.

At times, I identify for them what they cannot yet see in their own teaching. For example, in this conference Maureen and Diane said that they have not yet learned how to conference with children about their writing: "We're gonna learn that next week." As an observer of their teaching, I could see that they were doing a lot of conferencing. As a literacy course instructor, I felt that it is important that they understand what it means to talk with children about the text in a broad rather than narrow context. So I said to them, "You're both doing that now!" In this instance, too, I gave them examples of what I heard them say that told me they were conferencing: "If you have children read their piece to you, and they read it and say, 'Oh, I really like the part where . . .' or 'Can you tell me more about . . .' you've started to conference."

My role in guiding the practice of these teacher candidates just beginning their professional studies is a clear one: I am their teacher. As I observe teacher candidates working with children in elementary classrooms, there are specific aspects of their work to which I must attend. I need to help them develop the propensities of thought and action that articulate the goals and philosophy of the Learning Community. More specifically, as a literacy course instructor, I also know that as these teacher candidates learn to become teachers of literacy, there are certain ways of thinking and acting that I want them to develop so they can be teachers who will support the growth and development of children as literary learners.

For me, then, the propensities for establishing and working within a learning community, and the vision of literacy learning and instruction that can exist in such a community help to define my role and guide the way I construct my practice as a field instructor. These propensities and this vision give my work its distinctive character and help me to understand what my work entails.

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Louise and Me: An Analysis of a Field Instructor's Practice

Sharon A. Schwille

This chapter characterizes my work as a guide working with student teachers. It is a description and analysis of one episode of guiding teacher learning between a preservice teacher and myself, the field instructor. It is also a look at what shapes my thinking as I reflect in action during the conference and reflect on the action afterwards. I used Feiman-Nemser and Rosaen's framework as an analytic tool to examine my practice and the rationale behind my actions (see pp 7-35). The framework helped to focus my attention on the important features of the work and enabled me to see how I responded to the particulars of the situation.

Although clinical supervision is a prominent model in the literature on student teaching supervision and has acquired many meanings beyond its original formulation (e.g., see Cogan, 1973; Goldhammer, 1969), it does not include the range of actions that comprise the way I enact my guided practice work. Clinical supervision structures guided practice as a series of steps with a specific goal of identifying patterns of teaching behavior that could be improved. It is a process framework. Feiman-Nemser and Rosaen offer a substantive framework. It helped me to see that my guided practice work is constructed in practice based on careful analysis of the situation and on a synthesis of the program goals and my own beliefs about good teaching. The guided practice framework revealed that fidelity to one model of supervision is not the premise from which I work. I do not follow a particular sequence of procedures. Instead, I use many forms of teaching, including improvisation, and build a trusting relationship with the preservice teacher to support our work together. In many ways, my work fits Cohn and Gellman's (1988) notion of supervision as "situational teaching." I use cues from the context to help my teacher candidate connect principles of teaching and the program philosophy to her work with children.

In this chapter, I describe and analyze one guided practice episode featuring Louise, a student in the Learning Community Program. While the program goals described by Denyer (this volume) underlie my thinking and the direction of my work, this episode focused on finding an interface between Louise's agenda and my own, which was based on the program goals as well as my beliefs about good teaching. In searching for this interface, I played a variety of roles and used a variety of practices or strategies to influence Louise's learning. A secondary participant in this interaction was the cooperating teacher, Heather (a pseudonym). Louise and I referred to Heather frequently and her influence was apparent.

Louise was a senior in a pre-student-teaching field experience, preparing for student teaching which would occur in the same fifth-grade classroom. It was about the third week of the term, so Louise was still finding her place in the classroom. In this initial stage of developing our relationship, Louise and I had a conversation about her work in the classroom. Since this conversation did not immediately follow an observation of her teaching, it had a broader scope than feedback and reflection on a particular teaching episode. Louise was taking her last methods courses and she was expected to try out what she was learning during her courses in her practicum.

Using the guided practice framework, I examine our conversation by exploring our goals and analyzing the dialogue and its implications. A description and analysis of the conference, the themes that emerge, the roles and the forms that were used to address the participants explicit and implicit agendas follow. The conversation is presented in four segments, each with a description of the dialogue and an analysis of the thinking underlying my actions. This is a study of my thinking as a field instructor, using the guided practice framework to focus the analysis.

The Conference

Segment One

Description. Louise opens the conversation with a problem. She wants to establish a reading corner and a writing corner in the classroom and wants students to keep writing folders together in a file in the writing corner. Heather, the cooperating teacher, has questioned the purpose for the folders in the corner. Louise cannot figure out how to justify her plan to Heather.

> Louise: One thing I did want them to do was writing portfolios, such as folders, and I wanted them to keep it in a box in the back corner in a writing corner where all the kids would have their own folder so they can have it there, and Heather said, "Why?" and I said, "So they can all have their own folders back there." She doesn't want them to have their folder back there because she's afraid kids of

this age are going to take somebody else's folder. But I still want it, and she said, "Well, it's not that I'm saying no but I'm not sure it will work here." So I'd like to come up with some good reasons why I feel strongly about it being back there.

Sharon: What have you thought about it?

Louise: I feel that it's okay. This is what my main concern was, that it would be so convenient for them to have the folder right back there that they can just keep it all back there in a folder. But I'm afraid if they keep it in their desk, first of all I'm afraid that everything's not going to be kept together. It's just going to be. . . really their rough draft or whatever, their prewriting. It's going to be . . .stuffed in there just because like when I was a little kid I remember I'm sure that happened. And not only that, I just thought when everyone was done with their work and wanted to go back to the writing corner, usually I think if they're writing a story, if their folder's at their desk, they're just going to take their folder out and put it on their desk and start writing on their desk.

Sharon: It doesn't have the same element as a spot in the room that is part of your literate environment, so to speak. This part is the writing part of your literate environment. So you'd like to set up an atmosphere and places in the room that have special meaning.

Louise: Um hm. So there's the writer's corner and we have the reader's corner and then we have the author's chair in between. I don't know.

Sharon: Right. Excellent transition.

Louise: I liked it.

Sharon: So those seem like good reasons to have folders over there in the first place. It keeps things organized to keep the kids' papers in one place so they know where it is and it doesn't get lost in their desk or wadded up or ripped or whatever. And secondly, in my way of thinking, probably the most important reason is to establish a spot in the room that is very much a part of what you're setting up as a literate environment. It's a very prominent place in the room where we know writing occurs and that by having this prominent place in the room we know it is a top priority, it's valued a great deal.

Louise: Sounds good.

Louise and I move into thinking about how to approach Heather so that Louise might begin to establish this writing corner. This time I present the problem.

Sharon: All right, and how can we present that to Heather?

Louise: I don't know. She was very, very abrupt about the "why" and I just thought, well, convenience?

Sharon: All right, but now that you've thought through the "why," can you go back to her and say, "I've thought about your question." I'll be Heather. You talk to me. [Pause] You know, when we talked about having that writing corner and you asked why, that made me think a lot harder about this, and I've thought about it and here's what I'm thinking about that now. And then, you talk about your reasons why.

Louise: Umm, I can always give it a try

Sharon: And I think if you approach it with, "When you asked me that 'why,' it was a good question because it made me think a lot harder about, and I've thought a lot harder and I want to respond to that," or however you say it.

Louise: Sounds good. Okay. I like that. All I can do is try.

Analysis. In this opening segment of the conference, the dialogue focused on Louise's desire to establish part of the room as a writing corner. Initially, she could not respond to Heather's seemingly oppositional question. As I see it, the underlying issue was Louise's attempt to establish herself in the classroom as a legitimate, respected part of the teaching situation. She wanted to feel like she had something to offer, that she had some territory in the room, some physical space she could control, such as the writing corner, and teaching decisions that she could control, such as keeping the files in the corner. She wanted to feel that she had good ideas that would foster learning. She wanted to make decisions like a teacher. Her opening remarks about what she wanted, her desire to pursue the issue of the folders and her comment about having a strong feeling about the corner were indications to me of these underlying concerns. She also said she liked her ideas and felt it was "okay" to have folders in the writing corner, although she still seemed uncertain about them.

Acting on these interpretations, I assumed the multiple roles of encourager, helper, clarifier, prompter, and appraiser. I was responding to the teacher candidate and the situation at hand, rather than trying to enact a particular model of guided practice. Thus I was able to draw upon a variety of actions to find the most efficacious leads. By asking Louise to explain her reasons for the folders in the corner, I encouraged her to think more deeply about her purposes. Through a process of reflection, I clarified her reasons. At the same time, I modeled how to clarify and organize thoughts so they could be articulated.

The modeling I did here and throughout the conference became a prominent process I used in hopes of helping Louise to extend and articulate her thinking. The attempted role play in the second part of the conversation, "I'll be Heather. You talk to me," provided both a model and a prompt. Since Louise did not pick up her cue, I assumed her part provided her with a script that she could use in talking to Heather. I made a few evaluative comments, such as "Excellent transition," and "Those seem like good reasons," in my role of appraiser. Since they were words of praise in this instance, this role acted as a complement to the other roles, which were intended to encourage and support Louise in her attempts to work through the problem she presented.

Even in this opening section of the conference, one of my primary goals in helping Louise is apparent. I wanted her to be thoughtful about her practice and have sound reasons for her instructional decisions. Also, I wanted her to be able to articulate those clearly. This occurred when I asked her about her reasons for having the folders in the writing corner, my own clarification of her reasons, and my praise of her thinking. This articulation of reasons for instruction emerged as a major theme in this episode of guided teacher learning. It is not only a personal belief of mine that good teachers have good reasons for what they do and can talk about those clearly, but it is also a goal of the Learning Community Program.

Another goal was to help Louise develop a sense of autonomy and self-reliance so that she was not just a follower of curriculum guides or rider of bandwagons. This is why I worked with her on clarifying her reasons for the folders in the writing corner. In doing so, she also thought about the purpose of the writing corner itself, rather than setting it up because it sounded nice when she learned about writing corners in her coursework. In the short term, I wanted to help Louise become more assertive in her communication with

Heather and be able to present her ideas in a confident manner. I wanted her to be able to try out some new instructional methods. If Heather was not convinced they were worthwhile, none of us would learn about them and their instructional value. The attempted role play was an effort towards this goal; since Louise did not jump in with her part, I was uncertain what progress had been made. In previous interactions with Louise, I learned that her primary goal was to gain more confidence in herself as a teacher. It was still not clear at this point in the work exactly what Louise meant by confidence and how that is gained, but in the next segment of the conference this theme surfaced. It became manifest, in Louise's concern that the children have opportunities to gain confidence in themselves as writers.

Segment Two

Description. Louise again presents a problem: her uncertainty that she can explain why she has done something. This time it is being able to explain to parents why she has not corrected spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors in the final copies of children's written work.

Louise: Now that I have the book [called] *Taylor and Tory* in the corner, there are so many spelling errors and punctuation [errors] . . . . I'm afraid if parents come in and they read that book they'll notice there's punctuation and things that aren't [right]. Now how would I handle that? I don't know.

Sharon: All right. I'm the parent and I'm coming in and I notice this book . . . there's this wonderful book about Tory and Taylor and I start paging through and I [say], "This is great, but don't you make them correct their spelling mistakes?"

Louise: Well, usually we have a time that we revise and we edit; however, this was just our first story. It's more an assessment and a confidence builder. We had them go back and check their spelling. We also had them peer editing but obviously we have to work on it a little bit harder. It's something that now I know where to go with these kids, what needs work. Sound good?

Sharon: Umhm. Sounds good to me. Now, are you telling me you don't correct spelling mistakes or punctuation mistakes

Louise: No. I typed exactly their words. This is their work. . . . I can help them if they come to me before they do their final draft. I'll help them with whatever they need help in. Usually I tell them to look at their spelling. I don't like to give the spelling of a word because 90 percent of the time the kid really knows how to spell it. It's just that they're not sure, and if they can keep going to a teacher and saying, "How do you spell this word?", they're going to keep doing this and keep doing it instead of trying it themselves. So usually I have them try it themselves or ask somebody if that's how they think it's spelled. It is something, like I said, that we're going to work on. We're going to do some more editing and we're going to do some more revising. So my idea is that at the end of the year, our last stories, we can kind of look at that story and then we can go back to our first story and see exactly where we went wrong or how far we came from the beginning to the end.

Sharon: Okay, sounds good to me.

Louise: I guess, still, I'm thinking the parents might say something to me about it.

Sharon: Well, do you feel comfortable with that? Saying all that?

Louise: I'd have to think it out more clearly, but that's the reason I did it, so I suppose so. It's more of an assessment and confidence builder—[those] were the main reasons I did it.

Analysis. This section has several parallels to the previous section, with Louise presenting a similar problem of how to explain her reasons to an authority figure who is questioning her. In this instance she wanted to give parents reasons for not correcting all spelling and punctuation in children's writing. In my view, underlying this was Louise's desire to assume the role of teacher and to be accountable for products of instruction.

Once again, I attempted a role play process, but this time it worked. Louise became the teacher and I was a parent. Having experienced the previous failure, I was more conscious of trying to set up conditions where Louise could more easily assume her part. Therefore, I began as the parent and presented Louise with a question to which she had to respond. We then both went in and out of our role play easily, such as when Louise asked if her part sounded good. I responded positively and then assumed the role parent part again. Once more I asked a question and Louise had the opportunity to reiterate her thinking, clarifying and extending as she talked.

I continued to act as an encourager, helper, clarifier, prompter, and appraiser, but more by implication because Louise did most of the verbal work this time. Twice I told her that her reasoning and explanation seemed good to me, thus encouraging her and evaluating her work at the same time. She reflected on her own thinking by stating that she would need "to think it out more clearly." Was she understanding my goal for her to have sound reasons and be clear about them or was she identifying that goal independently? In either case, her statement indicated to me that she had begun to act autonomously and saw value in clear articulation of her purposes for instruction.

Louise ended this section by saying that the main reason she had the children do the writing was as an assessment and confidence builder. She stated this earlier in the dialogue as well. She introduced one of her primary concerns, that of building confidence. I knew from earlier conferences with her that this was a major goal for herself. Was she projecting that goal onto the children or did they really need some confidence building? It was difficult to tell from the conversation.

I understood Louise's use of the word "assessment" to mean an opportunity to find out what children know and are able to do and where instruction needs to be directed next. She said that now she "knows where to go with these kids" and on what they needed work. In the program, we use the word "assessment" to mean gaining information about children, the curriculum, and the environment for use in planning for meaningful instruction. It is not necessarily a time of evaluation in which a grade or evaluative comment would be given. Louise's use of the word showed me that she had assimilated some of the program concepts and was comfortable using this shared vocabulary. Here the program acted more directly as an influencing factor, not only in shaping Louise's beliefs about what constitutes teaching practice, but also in shaping the content of our conversation.

The third section of the conference focuses on different content, while the themes of reasons or purposes for instructional decisions and that of building confidence continue.

Segment Three

Description. Louise switches the conversation to focus on the reading unit she is beginning with the children. The theme of the unit is that size is relative. She says that her goal for today's lesson was to motivate the children to read the unit. Prior to this section of the dialogue, she described a video used to introduce the unit. In the discussion following the video, the children concluded that "size is relative to what you're comparing it to." I present the focal issue of this segment by asking a direct question.

Sharon: What are some of your overall goals and purposes for this unit on size?

Louise: I hadn't thought about that. The reason I wanted today was to get them more confident about or just confident and motivated to read the rest of the cluster. That's a good question. I think that it's just to get them thinking about size in a different way. So many times we compare it to humans, but really, you know, like size is relative depending on what you're comparing it to.

Sharon: So there are some concepts here about size that you want to get across. So there's content that you're after.

Louise: Umhmm . . .

Sharon: What else?

Louise: My main goal is that sometimes you think that something really huge is just the biggest and the strongest and things that are little are weak. . . . I want them to get rid of that misconception.

Sharon: You want to break down some stereotypes?

Louise: Right.

Sharon: Are there other stereotypes? Big is strong, little is weak, stereotypes about size that you would want to destroy?

Louise: That strength isn't always, that if we're really strong we're the best. In fact, in one of the stories it shows that cleverness is. It doesn't matter what size you are, that being clever is more important than being strong. There's another thing in the cluster that I like. It's this poem and it's a really funny poem, but I think I can bring a really good discussion out of it. It's "Huffer and Puffer." It's about these two giants that beat the crap out of each other and they become really small and they shorten themselves. Through this, I would bring in a discussion about what are ways we can resolve problems without killing each other or hitting each other besides insult.

Sharon: So is that an overall goal that you have, to talk about conflict?

Louise: But now I'm thinking that's probably a goal that I'm—

Sharon: That's a Learning Community [Program] goal.

Louise: Right. That's going to be coming throughout the whole year.

Sharon: So you've got some content about size, within that you're breaking down some stereotypes. You have a Learning Community goal about conflict resolution. Do you have any goals about reading? Improving the children's reading?

Louise: You're just getting me to think about different things that I haven't thought about before. Thank you.

Louise goes on to talk about having the children look at the way the authors develop characters in the stories in this unit because she noticed in the children's writing that they needed work on building characters. She relates the reading to the writing by suggesting that she will have the children write an author's page for their stories in which they describe themselves as the author. They will be the "character" for this page. Louise and I think together how this can be presented to the children. I give her some very specific suggestions such as, "You might be writing on the blackboard as they talk about these things or let a concept map develop or brainstorm ideas up on the board." Louise then says that Heather wants her to teach synonyms and antonyms, but she doesn't know why Heather wants her do this and doesn't see any connection to the reading unit. I press her into thinking it through.

Sharon: You don't know why she wants you to do this; your next step is to ask why. Now I'm sure you've got lots of ideas about how to do this but first of all you want to know why, what's the purpose, so you know where to reach these kids.

Louise: I know it's nice when you're writing a story and I guess I can bring that in. Instead of making it boring, using the same words over and over, it's nice to use a lot of descriptive words that mean the same thing that make the story a little more interesting.

Sharon: Exactly, exactly. That's a primary reason. Also when you're reading you might know some synonyms that might be in your head. You might fill them in to understand better. An author may use a word that . . . you understand one of the synonyms better and in your head you just put that in there. And when you're speaking, here's where you plug into what Elliot is trying to teach you about oral technique, when you're speaking you want to have a large enough vocabulary that you can make explanations interesting and different. You want them to be interesting. Now can we extend that to antonyms? By knowing antonyms, might you be able to explain an idea by talking about the opposite?

Louise: Umhm.

Louise agrees that opposites can be used to make a description more vivid and we think of an example. Louise explains how she could use some poems about size for the instruction. She would have children substitute synonyms for some words and then antonyms to see how it changes the text and nature of the poem.

Analysis. While I continued to challenge Louise to provide reasons for teaching the reading unit on size being relative, Louise responded with her issue of confidence when she said that the goal of today's lesson was to "get them more confident." Again, she was referring to the children's confidence, but I interpreted that to include her own confidence as well, even though this was not addressed explicitly in this conversation. Her lack of assertiveness with Heather in questioning about why synonyms and antonyms should be taught with this unit led me to believe that she needed to gain more confidence in herself. It may seem that we were talking from different agendas, but I was working on the belief that if Louise felt that she had sound reasons for her decisions about instruction and the content she chose to teach, then she would develop more confidence in her ability to make these decisions herself. Perhaps making this more explicit to Louise would have helped her to understand why I kept asking her to identify the goals and purposes of her instruction.

Talking about specific teaching strategies to use in order to address the content and goals of instruction added a new dimension to the conversation. Louise mentioned the "Huffer and Puffer" poem as a means to teach about conflict resolution and we thought together about how to teach about character development in text and how to use synonyms and antonyms. For the most part, Louise took the role of creator and planner, while I questioned her thinking as a way to analyze the effectiveness of the strategies she chose. I modeled this analysis in the hope that she would learn to ask these questions of herself. I also assumed the role of coach as I gave her some specific suggestions for using the blackboard or drawing a concept map. I saw my responsibility as helping Louise identify several possibilities for instruction from which she could choose and providing her with suggestions if she needed others. For instance, we thought of an example in which antonyms were used to describe something and Louise went on to think about poems she could use with the children.

My responsibility to teach and reinforce the program goals is evident at least twice in this section. In one instance, I pointed out to Louise that the goal of teaching about conflict resolution is compatible with the teaching dispositions subscribed to by the teacher education program. Louise agreed and identified this as a long-term goal. At another point, I connected the thinking about the use of synonyms to what Louise was learning in one of the program courses she was taking by saying, "Here's where you plug into what Elliot is trying to teach you about oral technique." The influence of program goals becomes even more evident in the last section of the conference.

Segment Four

Description. In the closing part of the conference, Louise returns to the topic of the writing corner. This time she explains what she plans to do next in developing that area of the room and involving children in the decisions.

Sharon: Okay, now what's the next thing you are going to do?

Louise: We're going to talk about the writing corner and then I want them to break down in groups just really quickly and make a list of the supplies they would like in there.

Sharon: Now, I want to tell you why I think that's neat that you're asking the kids what goes back there. Because what you're trying to build through all these things at the same time that you're working on kids' writing and learning content and reading ability, you're also developing this notion that you're a community of learners.

Louise: Umhm.

Sharon: So when you let them have some input into this community, what we're going to say up here, what we're going to put on this paper, then that becomes the working together part of this, their feeling of initiating power and a sense of ownership.

Louise: That's why I want them to bring their books to the reading corner.

Sharon: Okay, that's good too. You see how much you've already been able to accomplish in just a short amount of time? So pat yourself on the back for that.

Louise: I know, it took me all weekend to decide to have them decide what they want to do there.

Sharon: When you're thinking about something like that then say to yourself, what would be the way that would build community and sometimes the answer is, "I'm going to give the direction. I'm the person, I'm the adult in the situation and in this particular situation I have the wisdom." And at other times you're going to say, "This is something that we can all decide together," and that's what you want to look for. So the question you want to ask is, "How would I continue to build a community in this instance?" and then maybe that will help you think about how to plan.

Louise: Right, it took me that long to decide. Hopefully, I want them to feel like it's their writing corner. Well, thank you.

Analysis. In my view, Louise knew that her desire to have the children feel like the reading and writing corners belonged to them could be heightened by their bringing their own books and by making decisions about the materials needed for the writing corner. It was not apparent to me whether she recognized this as a program goal. I could have questioned her about the dispositions the program hoped to instill and pushed her to identify the one I wanted to highlight. Instead I chose to reinforce her thinking by saying, "I want to tell you why I think that's neat," and then told her which program goal her strategy fostered. Several factors influenced my decision, not the least of which was time. I knew we needed to finish up, and the most expedient way to get my point across was to tell it. I also recognized that we had had a long conversation in which I had pushed Louise to think harder about her instructional decisions and to be more assertive in her interactions with Heather. I felt that to do more pushing and probing at that point might jeopardize the gains we had made. So I told her what I was thinking. She confirmed my thoughts about the program goal, and my decision to teach by telling by her final statement. She reflected on how long it took to reach what I had said was a "neat" decision and that she wanted the children to "feel like it's their writing corner."

Discussion

What informs my thinking as I engage in my work as a field instructor and as I reflect on that work? By explaining how I decided what to do with Louise, I clarify the influences on my practice and uncover some of the complexities of this kind of work. Several factors, operating simultaneously, inform my thinking and decision making. These include my role as a field instructor in a particular teacher education program, my interpretation and enactment of that role, the program goals, my own beliefs about good teaching, my relationship with a teacher candidate, and how these factors come together in a particular situation with a particular teacher candidate.

Role Definition & Enactment

The teacher education program to which Louise and I belong defines the role of field instructor as a teacher, especially of the program goals, and an evaluator of the teacher candidate's proficiency in interpreting and implementing those goals in a classroom. According to the program, my responsibility is to guide and evaluate my teacher candidates, using the program goals as a framework. I am expected to help the teacher candidates connect what they learn in their courses to the realities of the classroom. I am to provide instruction about teaching and pedagogy from the perspective of the program's philosophy as it applies to classroom life.

One of the complexities of guiding teacher learning is the interplay between the defined role of field instructor and the enactment of that role in the situations that arise in practice. The role of field instructor is compatible with my own notion of myself as a teacher of teacher candidates regarding their learning in and about the context of the classroom. I am comfortable with my understanding of the program's philosophy and believe that my interpretations are reasonable. I see myself as a teacher with the special responsibility of helping teacher candidates make sense of and respond thoughtfully to their learners using the program goals as a lens. My enactment of this role is influenced by a web of factors.

Beliefs About Good Teaching & Program Goals

Two compelling factors which help me figure out how to enact my role as field instructor are my beliefs about good teaching and the specific goals of the Learning Community program. These act as a filter through which I read the cues of the situation and, in that situation, decide what is needed to help the teacher candidate. For instance, in the last section of the conference, I explicitly referred to the program goals to reinforce their applicability to classroom life as Louise and I talked about the writing corner she wanted to establish. By referring to the program propensity of fostering in children a sense of personal power and providing them opportunities to make decisions affecting their learning, I hoped to help Louise gain a deeper understanding of the meaning of that program goal and its manifestation in a classroom. The program goals are a constant item on my instructional agenda. I look for opportunities to interject instruction related to them into our dialogue by using the cues of the situation to alert me to possibilities. Likewise, my beliefs about good teaching influence how I think about my work and how I hope Louise will think about her work. My belief that good teaching includes well defined purposes for instruction and instructional decisions is a recurring theme in the conference.

Relationship

Another factor is my relationship with Louise and what I was learning about her. At the time of this conference, I had accumulated some knowledge about Louise from previous experiences with her. In addition, both Louise and I knew that our relationship would continue over the long term since we would work together at least six months until she completed her student teaching experience that would follow the current field practicum. I drew on this knowledge of Louise as I responded to cues from her in this particular situation, such as following her lead in talking about building confidence. I knew that this was a primary issue for her, so I wanted to pursue it both to understand her perspective better and to help her build her own understanding of the issue. At that point in the conference, I was not simply acting as the program missionary, indoctrinating her with the program goals, but as her personal teacher calling upon what I knew about her and what we were experiencing in the situation at the time. I was also willing to take risks with her, such as attempting to engage her in role plays, because I knew that if that instructional strategy failed, I would have more time with her to try another option. Our long term relationship allowed for the building of trust, which is essential to being able to choose more risky instructional methods and expecting that Louise would participate with me in her own learning.

The relationship Louise and I were building to carry out our work together did not conform to any preconceived supervisory model. Rather, it evolved as we worked together. While such relationships usually begin with a definite teacher/student dichotomy, this episode, which occurred relatively early in our association, reveals elements of collaborative thought, planning, and decision making. The teacher-learner aspect of our relationship is part of the roles defined for us by the program. But our relationship is also interpersonal in nature, built on mutual respect for each other, both as teachers and learners and on a shared understanding of our purposes. For instance, because Louise was participating in the program, I expected that she would be curious about teaching, learning, and children. Because I was the field instructor assigned to her by the program, Louise could expect that I would share in her wondering and help her seek ways to respond to her questions, even providing some answers when I had them. Our interpersonal relationship supported us as we worked together. For example, in the role play, neither of us knew how the other would respond since we had not worked in this mode together before. I believe Louise trusted me that this would be an educative strategy for her and I trusted that Louise would participate with an inquisitiveness and willingness to learn more from the experience.

Forms of Practice

It is apparent from the previous analysis that my practices arise out of all that informs my thinking rather than from the dictates of a particular model of supervision. I did not come to the conference with a preconceived pattern of interaction in mind nor did I have in mind a structure or approach to follow. Rather, I drew upon the cues I was receiving to make judgments and determine instructional methods that I thought would guide Louise in her learning. The point of my work with Louise was her learning. When that is the center of the work, then the aim is to select moves that fit this particular student in this particular context. Cohn and Gellman (1988) have coined the phrase "situational teaching" to describe a form of field-based practice which aims at helping student teachers connect the principles, theories, and methods learned in courses to classroom practice. As the instructor in the field setting, the guide uses probing questions and intervening comments to help the student teacher make connections, generate multiple teaching strategies and draw conclusions. While the teaching is context specific, it reinforces or clarifies general principles of teaching and learning. Much of the episode with Louise could be described as an example of situational teaching . For instance, in the dialogue about Louise's teaching of synonyms and antonyms, I helped Louise think of strategies for teaching based on what she had been learning in her course on literacy and children's language, and helped her to transfer what we had talked about to the teaching of a related topic.

Because I am not bound by any one model of guided practice, I am free to choose interventions which I judge most appropriate at the time. I am also responsible for assessing Louise's learning needs accurately so that I can use instructional strategies that not only fit the situation, but also promote long-term growth. This is not a case of "anything goes." My own beliefs about what constitutes good teaching and the program philosophy impel me to highlight certain issues, such as having clear purposes for instruction. In Louise's case, I intervened in certain ways that I believed would foster Louise's growth, such as asking her to articulate her reasons for teaching the reading unit on size being relative. These interventions were congruent with my views of good teaching and with the program goals.

The work of guided practice does not stop at the end of the conference and resume with the next contact. I continued to think about my work with Louise to determine how I might best provide educative experiences for her. During the conference, I engaged in what Schon (1987) calls reflection-in-action. I tried to determine what was happening as it happened in order to choose instructional strategies that seemed most viable and fruitful. I also tried to coach Louise, through role playing. Following the conference, I thought about Louise s progress and how I had helped or not helped to further her growth. I also tried to interpret our conference by thinking about what Louise had said and how I understood it. Some of my insights about the real issues Louise presented did not occur until after the conference when I had a more objective perspective on our conversation. With these new insights, I could then clarify what I thought was important to work on the next time we met. With a clearer understanding, I am more likely to succeed in connecting my agenda with Louise's because I recognize the underlying issues that emerged in the specific contexts of our work.

How does evaluation enter in? As most teachers know, the tension between nurturing the growth of learners and evaluating their progress is inherent in the teacher-learner relationship. As in most situations, teachers manage but do not resolve this tension (Lampert 1985). To resolve it would be to choose one of the responsibilities over the other and teachers must do both. The program structures my evaluative role over the long term by requiring formal evaluation conferences twice each term. I am also responsible for writing a detailed description of all my teacher candidates upon completion of their student teaching, a description that presents their teaching proficiencies using the program goals as a framework. In the conference with Louise, I managed the tension and enacted the role of teacher/evaluator during our work together. A few times I explicitly told her that I thought she had a good thought or her idea was "neat." At other times, I implied that she needed to think harder or be clearer by asking her questions such as those about her purpose for choosing her instructional strategies. At the same time, our relationship was strong enough that Louise saw these questions and comments as helpful and thanked me for pushing her thinking. We had built enough history together to understand that our purpose was to think together in order to further Louise's learning. The length of time we had already been together and knew we would continue to work together, the relationship of trust and respect we had established, and the program structures all helped to manage the tension.

Conclusion

The description and analysis of one episode of my practice as a field instructor highlight the complex nature of the work of helping novices learn to teach. This paper presents an instance of reflection in action by describing and analyzing one conversation between myself as the field instructor and a teacher candidate. Using the elements of Feiman-Nemser and Rosaen's guided practice framework as points of analysis and discussion, I have also reflected on my practice. The framework helped focus my attention on significant features of my work. The importance of the relationship between the guide and the teacher/learner is apparent. Without some level of trust, a willingness to take risks, a shared commitment to engage in the learning process, and mutual respect for each other as educators, the work could only be done superficially. This episode also brings to light the importance of an adequate knowledge base, including a repertoire of moves and the ability to enact a variety of roles as needed to shape an educative experience for the learner.

As frequently happens following an analysis of a guided practice session, I am left with new questions to explore. What clues from the teacher or teacher candidate help the guide decide from moment to moment which leads to follow and which moves to make? By enacting multiple roles, does a guide create a richer learning experience or one that is disjointed, unfocused, and confusing? How does the learning teacher make sense of it all? What must a guide know to be effective? How do views of good teaching held by the participants in guided practice affect the forms of practice used? By continued examination of this kind of work we can learn more about the various elements that come together in guiding teacher learning and result in the growth of the student teacher or teacher. The analytic framework developed by Feiman-Nemser and Rosaen provides one basis for such examinations.

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Dilemmas of A Field Instructor: A Search for Common Ground

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> Whenever I met one of them who seemed to me at all clear-sighted, I tried the experiment of showing him my Drawing Number One, which I have always kept. I would try to find out, so, if this was a person of true understanding. But, whoever it was, he, or she, would always say: "That is a hat." (Saint-Exupéry, 1943, p. 9)

In *The Little Prince*, Antoine De Saint-Exupéry (1943) describes how people respond to a picture his character has drawn. Whereas the artist intends the picture to show a boa constrictor who has swallowed an elephant, other people who view the picture see only a hat. Since people cannot agree on what the picture represents, a conflict of meaning results. Each person is certain that what he sees is correct. Each person's perception influences his reality.

Saint-Exupéry explains to the Little Prince the difficulties of finding a common ground upon which people can agree about their perceptions. In the story, people's perceptions are shaped by different beliefs, experiences, values, and points of view. To arrive at some consensus about the meaning of the picture, people need to find a way to change other's perceptions by challenging the ways that beliefs and points of view shape their realities. Similarly, educators working together must search for ways to explain, challenge, and negotiate mutual understandings about what they are doing and why.

This chapter explores the work of one field instructor and her student teacher, two people who seldom find ways to challenge, debate, and arrive at common perceptions. We begin by briefly introducing the field instructor and student teacher. We then describe two instances when we observed them talking about teaching and learning. Then we share our analysis of their interactions and discuss the dilemmas resulting from their inability to find a common ground. We close by suggesting implications for the field instructor's ongoing work and learning.

The Participants

In her role as field instructor in the Academic Learning Program, Michelle (who also is our third author) worked with Joe for a 10-week period. Joe was completing a bachelor of science degree in social science while concurrently earning a secondary teaching certificate. During student teaching, he taught sociology, government, and economics to junior and senior high students. Since Michelle had worked collaboratively for over a year with Joe's cooperating teacher on a professional development project focused on students' learning, she was quite familiar with the students, class, and school. Having completed field assignments, including teaching one week of lessons in economics the previous term, Joe was also acquainted with the site.

Deb and Jaime shadowed Michelle on two different days as she interacted with Joe. They interviewed her at the beginning of the day, throughout, and afterwards in order to probe reasons for her comments and actions as well as her beliefs about teaching and learning to teach. Michelle's views and statements come from the many conversations all three authors had during the term of Joe's student teaching.

The Interactions

We observed two kinds of interactions between Michelle and Joe. One conversation arose informally and concerned a bulletin board display in Joe's classroom. The other instance included Michelle's observation of Joe's high school sociology class and a set of conferences that followed.

Instance One: The Flag. On the way to school the morning Jaime observed Michelle, she shared her concerns about Joe. She was particularly worried about his inability to think critically about his practice:

> Things were easy academically for him in school. He knows a lot about some of the subject matter he teaches, like economics. It's his missing habit of inquiry into what he is doing and why.

Michelle and Jaime met Joe in the hallway outside his classroom. Entering Joe's classroom, their eyes were drawn to a large American flag, about 3 feet by 2 feet, affixed to the back bulletin board, with these words, in large letters, "IRAQ CAN'T TOUCH THIS."

Michelle seemed shocked by the display and immediately asked Joe about it:

Michelle: Who put it up?

Joe: Two students.

Michelle: Did they ask your permission?

Joe: No, I thought the cooperating teacher said yes.

Michelle: Had they done this on their own initiative?

Joe: Yeah, um, I guess so.

Although Michelle showed her surprise and concern about the bulletin board, Joe's facial expression remained deadpan. He stood with his hands in his pockets and mumbled in response to Michelle's questions. Michelle continued looking at the flag and asked Joe, "What do you think about this?" For a long time Joe said nothing, even though Michelle stood staring at him. After a minute or so he said, "A bit strange." After another long silence, he added; "Intimidating." Michelle asked Joe to talk more about his reactions, but he stood silent. Through questions and stating her own astonishment, Michelle tried to encourage Joe to explain what he found "intimidating" about the display. Joe remained silent.

Looking at the flag and intentionally striking a deliberative pose, Michelle started to talk aloud about what she was thinking:

> What could be the purpose of the students putting that up? I wonder why they did that? How could I learn what they were thinking? I'm also interested in what other students are thinking, if they are, about this. Probably their reactions will differ from each other. Actually, there are two things here: students' reactions to the flag, and their reactions to the words under the flag.

Michelle waited before continuing, looking at the flag, at Joe, and back at the flag again. She smiled, sighed, and looked at the bulletin board again, then she continued:

> I wonder if this is an arrogant view—you know, that the U.S. is always great. What does this bulletin board suggest to students? What ideas about power and military might they be getting? From where are these ideas coming, home, school, the media?

Finally, Joe entered into the conversation. He interrupted Michelle and started talking about his students' conservative political views. He wondered whether students were making a political statement or were just being cynical about the Persian Gulf situation.

He said he did not know for sure because he had not ever had, nor had ever thought about having, a discussion about why the flag was there and what students might have been thinking.

Michelle kept the conversation alive, showing surprise, interest, and wonderment in her facial expressions. She asked again about the two students who had put the flag up:

> Hmm, that's interesting. They are not particularly friendly. One is very extroverted, but one hardly ever speaks. I wonder why they teamed up for this?

Joe agreed, nodding his head while Michelle listed possible motivations the students might have had. Michelle sighed, adding, "This is too juicy an event to let it go without talking about it! You can learn a lot about your students."

A long silence followed. Michelle turned back to the bulletin board and said in a low tone of voice that she was uncertain at this point what she would do as a teacher. After a minute of silence, she suggested some possible activities that Joe might do with his classes—explore the meaning of the Gulf crisis, discuss their families' attitudes, and then, maybe, move toward a study of the conflict itself. "School and classroom should not be divorced from the world," she added. She even mentioned that it might be interesting to plan classes around the themes of freedom of speech and political disagreement. After all, the students took the initiative of using the bulletin board, which belongs to the whole class, to express a personal view which involves political perspectives on the part of the students. After another long silence, she added, "When events happen in class, you can take advantage of them."

The conversation ended when the PA announced a social studies department meeting. Michelle advised Joe to attend the meeting. As they left the room, she urged Joe to think about the issues they had discussed.

Instance Two: The Sociology Lesson. A week later, Deborah accompanied Michelle to observe Joe's junior/senior sociology class. Michelle greeted Joe and quickly took a seat near the back of the room. Talking and laughing with each other as they came into class, students quickly took their assigned seats when the bell rang. While they chatted quietly among themselves, Joe walked to the center of the room, leaned on the lectern and said, first softly then more loudly, "Quiet!" He began talking over the students, telling them that they would not be going to the library anymore: "You guys are goofing off and stuff there too much." As students moaned, he quickly began explaining that today they were going to do something which would help them get to know more about each other. The class had participated in a kind of Socratic discussion led by a visiting teacher the week before. While some students had liked it, many complained that they couldn't share their ideas during open discussions because they did not feel they knew their classmates well enough.

In response, Joe had prepared an assignment sheet called a "Get to Know Ya Session." He had distributed this sheet to the students at the previous class session. The sheet listed four questions: (1) What do you plan to do after high school? (2) What are some of your interests? (3) What is something that irks or bothers you, e.g., a pet peeve? (4) What do you think is an important (or the most important) social issue presently? Why?

Joe began by sharing his own responses, "to kind of model how responses should be given." When answering the third question, Joe mentioned that rude people really irked him. "Like you guys," he said. "A lot of you are sometimes rude." Many students responded by calling out "Hey, I'm not rude!"

After answering the four questions himself, he called on a male student sitting closest to his right. For the next 45 minutes, each student in the class responded to questions, round-robin style. Students spoke primarily to Joe. Little student-student interaction occurred, and when it did, it took the form of students calling out comments to each other. Joe's verbal and non-verbal responses to the students' comments varied, both during and following individual commentaries. His responses did not seem to follow any particular pattern (i.e., they were not differentiated according to gender or the content of the comment.) In several instances, when the students finished sharing, Joe remarked, "Good," or "Okay, thanks." In other instances, he simply said, "Okay, next person."

At times, Joe commented on what individuals said, usually in relation to the social issue question. For example, when one student's answer was, "I think we should just go in and bomb Iraq and North Korea," Joe said, "I guess a lot of people share your views." When another student offered an alternative response, "I think we should stay out of Iraq and war," Joe raised his eyebrows, sighed, hesitated for five or six seconds, and then said, "Huh . . . interesting." Another student mentioned drugs as a serious social concern. Joe's only comment to her was, "Yeah. . . . Do you know how much anesthesiologists make?" When a number of students said they did not have a social issue to raise, Joe seemed especially ill at ease. He shuffled his feet, laughed nervously, and hesitated before commenting. He appeared uncertain about how to probe students' responses. In one instance, for example, Laura said she had no social issue to discuss. Joe asked, "No social issue?" "No," she responded, so Joe shrugged and called on the next student. When another girl gave the same response, he hesitated, opened his mouth a few times as if he wanted to say something, and then asked her, "Can you say something about where you work?"

Joe's loss of words and uneasiness seemed most apparent when Mary talked at length about her "pet peeve." She told the class that she was upset because people thought she was a different person now than she used to be. She felt this was unfair and untrue. She mentioned having had an accident which badly injured her back and caused her to drop out of pompom and dance. Mary stopped in mid-sentence several times, her voice wavered, and her eyes filled with tears. She seemed to be controlling her emotions only with great effort. Joe looked uncomfortable during this exchange; he kept his eyes on his papers or on the other students. When Mary finished talking, he simply said, "Okay. Next person."

When all of the students had completed their turn, Joe summarized what people had said: Some people were long-winded and some were short. You talked about Iraq, poverty and social stratification [a concept the class was currently studying.] So, we'll talk more about these over the next few weeks. So, did this help? Do you feel more comfortable talking?

At this point, Mary raised her hand and asked, loudly and forcefully, whether a student who didn't want to talk about a particular issue could be excused to go to the library when the class had discussions. Joe said, "Well, um, maybe—well, I don't know. We'll see." Mary interrupted and vehemently insisted that it wasn't fair to make someone listen and talk about issues that they were uncomfortable discussing. "Well, okay," Joe sighed. As the bell was about to ring, Joe reminded students to read the next chapter in their textbook on social mobility, adding, "We'll try to tie in some of the issues you talked about. You know this class just kind of goes wherever." Students quickly gathered their books and left for their next class.

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The Conferences about the Sociology Lesson. Deborah observed two conferences between Joe and Michelle: a 20-minute discussion immediately following the observation (while Joe ate lunch) and another later that same day during Joe's one-hour preparation period. Though separated because of time constraints, the conferences had shared foci (even carrying through on themes apparent in the conversation Michelle and Joe had about the flag bulletin board). The conferences centered around four issues: (1) a concern about Mary; (2) the purposes of the lesson; (3) whether Joe felt he had achieved his purposes in the lesson; and (4) what he had learned from teaching the lesson.

Michelle began the first conference rather abruptly as she returned from talking with Mary, the student who had been close to tears in class, in the hallway. "Tell me your reaction to Mary's comments in class," Michelle urged. Joe looked at her, shrugged, and didn't seem to know what to say.

Michelle: She seemed quite upset during class.

Joe: Yes, she was last week during Dennis' class [the visiting teacher].

Michelle: What would you have done if she'd cried?

Joe: Luckily she didn't.

Michelle [quickly]: But what if she had?

Joe: Yeah, um, I don't know.

After a long silence, Michelle asked Joe how Mary had been acting in the last week. "You know her better than me," Michelle added, "What have you seen?" Joe recalled that Mary had cried in class on another recent occasion, and that he'd also heard that Mary had broken up with her boyfriend. Also, Mary had just switched her research report topic to suicide. With heavy breaths and looks of concern, Michelle listened and continually asked Joe:

> What do you think about this? Are these behaviors coincidental or are they showing a pattern? Teachers have to pay attention to these kinds of clues, and taking action when it seems necessary is part of a teacher's moral responsibility.

She suggested several options to help Mary, including talking with her individually (as Michelle had done in the hallway), talking with the cooperating teacher, consulting a school counselor, and consulting other teachers (including teachers who knew her). Joe expressed reluctance to take any action. He said:

> When you're teaching, you don't really think what you should be doing. You're not supposed to notice these things. I don't really think about noticing them. I always think that's somebody else's job. I don't know. My mom, being an older female in home economics, gets a lot of this stuff.

Michelle responded to these statements by asking him more questions about Mary's particular actions. Michelle stopped at times to summarize what they knew about Mary from discussing her uncharacteristic behaviors, from what happened in class, and from what Michelle had learned by talking with another teacher about Mary. In a clear and forceful tone of voice, Michelle stated her concerns. "When a high school kid is feeling real blue," she said, "it's very easy to turn to drinking or doing drugs."

Moving away from a discussion about Mary, which took about one-third of the total conference time, Michelle asked Joe what he had wanted to happen from today's lesson. "I'm not sure it happened," he said. While describing his uncertainty, he pointed to one student's controversial response. Michelle asked, "What compelled you to do a 'get to know you' session?" Despite having written several purposes on the assignment sheet he'd handed Michelle (which doubled as a lesson plan), Joe was unable to answer the question. Michelle tried again:

> Michelle: So how did you think today's lesson would help students?
>
> Joe: Well, help them see that everybody's the same. That people have similar feelings. That it's okay to talk in class.
>
> Michelle: Do you think students got that?
>
> Joe: Yeah, they know now it's open. It's up to you. There's opportunity. It's okay to have different opinions. No one was exactly the same.
>
> Michelle: Can you think about the range of responses that you've heard from students? The range of concerns?

Unable to summarize the range of concerns, Joe mentioned two students' opposing views on the Gulf Crisis. When one student said that the United States shouldn't bomb Iraq, Joe said he could not think of how to probe her response.

> That's when I decided, well, the easy way out is to say, "Let's go on." I was trying to think of something to say, but it just wasn't I just drew a blank.

Michelle nodded in acknowledgment, assuring him that other teachers have had similar experiences. She suggested some general probes he could use with students when he felt that way, for example, Why do you think that? Can you say more about it?

Michelle moved the conversation to a discussion of the messages Joe had given his students through his actions. "Here's how you responded to Liz after she talked," Michelle said as she showed Joe how he'd averted his eyes, frowned, and spoke in a monotone. She asked a series of questions, with little response from Joe: "What message do you think she may have gotten by your response? Is that what you wanted? Does that fit with what you had expected?" Michelle told Joe that he was giving students clear messages about which opinions they had that he did and did not approve of. When Joe said he had a hard time "keeping his own views out of it" and staying objective in class, Michelle validated his feelings and agreed. They spent several minutes talking about the difficulties involved in stimulating controversial discussions. She told Joe:

> I think one role that the teacher plays in a situation like this is not just a mediator, but a person who creates an atmosphere whereby people can disagree and have airing time to make their argument. You need to make sure people are going to listen to other people's argument. You need to create rules in the classroom for having discussion and make sure they are known. And you also need to abide by them.

Michelle then turned the conversation to the issue of how Joe might use what he had learned that day for planning future lessons in sociology. She pointed out that he had learned a great deal about issues that concerned students and about the differing viewpoints students held on those issues. Now he needed to think carefully about how he was going to use this information, she advised, for his future lessons. Since their time together was just about over, Michelle asked Joe to begin thinking about this issue, telling him that they would discuss it on Sunday (when they had arranged a time to talk about and plan some lessons together).

Analysis

Looking across the two instances in which Michelle and Joe had conversations about teaching, we noted two prevalent characteristics. First, long silences occurred in which neither Michelle nor Joe spoke. Usually, Michelle had asked a question or set of questions (e.g., what Joe had learned about students from the range of concerns they expressed in sociology) or had stated what she might have done in the situation (e.g., what she might ask students about the flag bulletin board). In either case, Michelle would stop talking and look at Joe, while Joe often avoided looking directly at Michelle.

Second, we noted that Michelle dominated the conversations in terms of choosing the agenda topics, even when to switch from one topic to another, and how to discuss them. In the conferences following the sociology class, she moved between a focus on Mary (the troubled student), examining the purposes of the lesson and whether Joe felt he achieved them, and what Joe had learned that day in his teaching. At one point, Joe raised an issue (in response to Michelle's question) that was possibly an insight on his part ("As a sociology teacher I sometimes also feel like I am also a morals and ethics teacher."). Michelle did not probe this statement. In the discussion about the flag bulletin board, she raised the issue to begin with and kept the conversation going by asking questions, modeling her thinking, and suggesting what she might ask students.

In interviews with Deb and Jaime after the observations, Michelle expressed her concerns about trying to strike a balance among three needs in her conversations with Joe: considering his views and feelings, working on long-term goals for his teaching and learning to teach (e.g., focusing on students' learning), and working on reacting to immediate needs of a situation (e.g., handling the situation with Mary).

> I tried to get him to talk to me so that I can be aware of my learner . . . I was trying to help him be aware of his own feelings and views as a learner. He is so resistant. Also, I cannot uncover why I can't get him to think with me.

Enacting the Role of Field Instructor. As we watched Michelle working with Joe and as we listened to her talk about how she defines what she does, we saw that she moved between being a teacher of high school students and a prospective teacher (Joe), and being a student of teaching. She used many different strategies: questioning Joe, role-playing situations, reminding him of things he had said and done in class, and trying to demonstrate ways to think about a particular situation. At times she even suggested actions he might have taken. For instance, she suggested questions Joe could have asked students about the flag bulletin board. She made these suggestions in order to help him see that he had a perfect opportunity to make an inquiry about his students and "to see his students as individual learners and to see the role of [students'] learning in his own learning to teach." In handling the situation with Mary, Michelle suggested different courses of action (e.g., talking with her individually, talking with the cooperating teacher, seeing her counselor) and how critical it was for a teacher to pay attention to the kinds of clues received from examining Mary's behavior.

Sometimes Michelle "became" Joe. For example, she imitated what his verbal and non-verbal responses to several students had been. "Here's how you responded to Liz after she talked," she said as she showed Joe how he'd averted his eyes, frowned, and spoke in a monotone. Then she showed a spirited response made to another student. Moving back into the field instructor role, she asked Joe, "What message do you think the student may have gotten from your response? Is that what you wanted? Does that fit with what you'd planned to do?"

Michelle modeled her ways of thinking, and discussed her reasons for acting a particular way or suggesting certain actions. Using this strategy heavily with the incident around Mary, Michelle told Joe what she did and why. She listed the questions she asked herself about ways to follow up on Mary's discomfort. She talked with Joe about how and why she added up the clues that convinced her of Mary's distress. Michelle also pointed out that talking with colleagues, other teachers, and the counselor, could assist her in helping Mary.

Beliefs about Field Instruction. Michelle's views about what constitutes good teaching shaped her actions and comments when working with Joe. She believes strongly that knowing about students is very important in teaching, stating that, "The center of teaching is knowing your students, not just knowing your content, because you're not teaching material, you are teaching students."

Michelle holds a view of teaching in which the students play a central role. She believes that teachers should care deeply about their learners as persons who are trying to understand particular content. She wanted Joe to help his students see connections between the content learned in school and everyday life. In Michelle's opinion, Joe could do this only if he knew about his students "if he cared enough to find out what was going on inside their heads." Michelle believes that reflection upon students' inner thoughts and motivations is crucial in teaching. In working with Joe, her student in this case, Michelle constantly tried to uncover his beliefs and views, hoping to understand better why Joe seemed unable or unwilling to analyze his own teaching. She created opportunities, for example, to learn more about Joe's images of school and of the teachers' role in students' learning (e.g., his view of the teacher as authoritarian), believing that this information might help her to overcome his apparent resistance to learning more about teaching.

Michelle also wanted Joe to understand and share some of her beliefs. For example, she sees student teaching as an opportunity to practice being and thinking like a teacher within a supportive environment. She wanted Joe to use this time to experiment with putting into practice ideas he learned during his preservice preparation and to examine how different actions influence students' learning. In this way, she believed, Joe could form habits of reflection and inquiry about his students' learning as well as his own. Student teaching, according to Michelle, should begin the process of becoming a life-long student of teaching. "Good teachers," she explained to Joe, "are those who continually reflect upon and seek to improve their practices."

Dilemmas of Field Instruction

Our description and analyses of these two instances of guided practice point to the complex and often challenging nature of the work. As we tried to account for what we noted between Michelle and Joe, three dilemmas emerged over and over. Rooted in the institutional and political fiber of schooling, as well as the relational characteristics of guided practice work, these dilemmas are faced to some extent by all persons who engage in guided practice. In reality, the dilemmas are overlapping and intertwined; we separate them here for the purposes of discussion.

Dilemma One: Assistance versus Assessment

The relationship between field instructors and their student teachers is inherently asymmetrical, both in power and in status. This power and status difference emerges from the differential kinds of knowledge and expertise about teaching and learning to teach held by the participants. Field instructors, by virtue of their experience, possess more knowledge about teaching and learning than their student teachers. Field instructors have another kind of power as well, since they are charged with a responsibility to assess the student teachers' progress, ultimately allowing or denying them entry into the profession.

Given these power and status differentials, is it possible for a student teacher to share freely and candidly his views about teaching, learning, and learning to teach, even if he runs the risk of getting a poor evaluation if his views differ greatly from his field instructor's? How can we as field instructors reconcile the often conflicting roles of helper and evaluator? How can we find ways to support novices' learning, to give them a chance to share their beliefs openly, while still being bound by our institutional role as evaluators?

Finally, the norms of the teaching profession lead us to question the ways that field instructors and student teachers can work together. Expectations for privacy and non-experimentation are so prevalent in teaching. In combination with power and status differentials, novices may get a strong message that only certain ideas and views should be discussed in guided practice relationships (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986; Little, 1990; Parker, 1990).

Dilemma Two: Clash of Views or What if I'm Right, He's Wrong?

Already fragile in terms of the level and degree of trust and honesty, the relationship between the novice and guide is also shaped by their different life experiences. The guide usually has had experiences with pupils as well as with other novice teachers. Guides are able to draw on these teaching experiences and on readings and discussions they have had with other teacher educators to create a range of expectations and orientations that supports their work with novices. While the guides' work is shaped by these varied experiences and orientations, student teachers come armed with usually only their experiences as students and perhaps a few teaching experiences. In many cases, in comparison to their guide, novices may be less sophisticated in their thinking and less able to communicate clearly their ideas about teaching in comparison to their guide.

On the one hand, guides want to support novices' right to speak about what they believe, to give them a "voice" in the work and validate their experiences and understandings; on the other hand, guides must still act upon sound and justifiable principles based on intellectual, moral, and political reasoning. The dilemma for field instructors sets in as they try to reveal, challenge, and often alter the beliefs held by novices, while at the same time trying to establish a safe relationship in which novices feel free to share their views. In some instances, field instructors may need to suspend their own beliefs for a time and take the perspective of the novice in order to help him articulate his views more clearly. When and how, then, should a guide begin to believe, "The novice's ideas are seriously flawed," and then what action must the guide take? What will be the "costs" of her action?

Dilemma Three: Can a Good Teacher Ever "Give Up" on Her Learners?

As a form of teaching, field instruction carries a set of obligations, the most important being the commitment to help all students learn something worthwhile. As such, field instructors feel a deep sense of commitment to help their student teachers learn and be successful in teaching. Most teachers believe that even when the teaching/learning process appears impossible, a good teacher never gives up on students, but always searches for what Herbert Kohl (1984) describes as "the click," the magical moment in which the teacher is able to converge with a student's mind and feelings in a way that promotes his learning.

Yet this obligation of making each student succeed differs when the learning is part of professional education. Not all teacher candidates will become successful teachers, no matter what kind of preparation and support they are given. When field instructors work with a student teacher who is unlikely to become a successful teacher, they face the serious dilemma of how to reconcile the concurrent beliefs of not giving up on any student with the moral obligation of not admitting persons to the profession who cannot work with students in morally, politically, and intellectually justifiable ways. What criteria can one use to make a fair decision about a novice's ability or inability to continue in the profession?

To some extent Michelle faced these dilemmas in her work with Joe and they affected her pedagogical decisions. While trying to listen to Joe's ideas, she faced the harsh reality that his values and beliefs about teaching differed radically from hers. Moreover, she felt that Joe's beliefs would not contribute to his growth or his students' growth. She made the decision to extend Joe's student teaching period, setting out specific practices she wanted to see (e.g., particular formats for planning, different small group formats with well-designed tasks for students) based on what she believed to be sound teaching principles. She ultimately passed Joe into teaching, writing him a mediocre recommendation which honestly portrayed areas he had worked on and areas still needing growth.

Conclusion

Many tensions and issues shape the ways field instructors and student teachers seek to manage the dilemmas endemic to their relationships. Returning to our examples, we can speculate about what Michelle and Joe might have done in their search for common ground.

To do this, we turn to Schon's (1987) work on reflective coaching. According to Schon, a good coach should be capable of managing several strategies of instruction and inquiry in order to represent the relevant issues. But, for this to be successful, the coach should search for appropriate means of communication that allow:

> ...showing and telling matched to the peculiar qualities of the student before [her], learning how to read [the student's] particular difficulties and the potential from [his] efforts at performance, and discover and test what [the student] makes of her intervention (p.118).

Our own analyses suggest that finding the unique qualities of a particular student and a particular situation provide both the ends and means for supportive conversations about teaching and learning to teach. Focusing on concrete practices, whether they are in a classroom between a teacher and students or between a field instructor and student teacher, can supply the means for guiding novices through a teaching situation while providing the grist for their learning from it. The guide's focus on the concrete must be mixed, however, with an understanding of teaching principles informed by other experiences, scholarly reading, discussions with colleagues, and reflection on the act of guiding a novice. Our analyses and resulting dilemmas suggest two changes in the conditions that generally surround the relationship between guide and novice. First, this study calls into question brief relationships between student teachers and field instructors, relationships in which the individuals cannot develop the kind of trust and understandings of each others' views and obligations in order to seek common goals. Moreover, short relationships make for few chances for novice and field instructor to communicate about particular views, dispositions, and understandings about teaching and learning. We doubt, for example, that the 10 weeks that Michelle and Joe had to work together was sufficient time for them to challenge each other.

Secondly, working with colleagues who are also thinking about the problems and dilemmas of guided practice is very important for field instructors. By their very nature, dilemmas cannot be solved. A serious examination of the conditions and factors that shape field instructor's decisions in different situations will lead to a better understanding of this work. Together, colleagues can suggest changes in the usual institutional arrangements that foist large numbers of student teachers onto one field instructor's workload. Such collaboration may enable field instructors to create occasions for talking with each other and thinking about the very dilemmas we write about. It is novice teachers, and ultimately the children they will teach, however, who have the most to gain as a result of serious, thoughtful, and ongoing exploration of guided practice by field instructors.

Endnotes

[1] Authorship is in alphabetical order.

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Learning with Experience

Nancy Jennings, Kathleen Peasley, & Cheryl Rosaen

Recent descriptions of collaborative work in school settings contain vivid images of alternative formats and content for collegial work. Teachers collaborate with each other to pursue specific questions and problems of practice (e.g., Lytle & Fecho, 1991; Miller, 1990); teachers and university faculty jointly inquire into ways to improve classroom teaching (e.g., Cochran-Smith, 1991a; Gomez, 1990; Schram, Ricks & Sands, 1992; Wilson, Mill & Yerkes, 1992); and preservice teachers engage in discussions of classroom life in the company of experienced teachers and researchers (e.g., Cochran-Smith, 1992b; Smagorinsky & Jordahl, 1991). Frequently these new experiences take place in the context of professional development schools or other school contexts where educators are attempting to invent new institutions and work structures to foster teacher learning and support collaborative relationships between schools and universities around shared goals (Cochran-Smith, 1991a; Holmes Group, 1990).

These arrangements offer settings for serious guided practice work, professional activity directed toward helping teachers learn to teach and learn from their teaching experience. Those in the position of guide (e.g., university supervisors working with student teachers, classroom teachers working together, researchers working with classroom teachers) have the opportunity to collaborate in their own learning while they also support a teacher's learning. These new ways of collaborating open up opportunities to redefine traditional norms of interaction prevalent in schools today (Barth, 1991; Lieberman & Miller, 1991). Yet we need to know a great deal more about these new relationships and their promise to improve teaching and enhance student learning (Little, 1990). We need to ask serious questions about the nature of the collaboration and the benefits and limitations to all parties involved: university-based researchers, teachers, and students. These questions might include some of the following: How, if at all, does a newly-forged collaborative school culture shape the work of guides and teachers, and of teachers and students? What are the benefits and limitations to the different forms guided practice might take in such schools? What effects, if any, are there on the relationship between a university-based guide and classroom teachers when they work together to attempt more adventurous classroom practices? If there are multiple ambitions for the guided practice work (e.g., studying the change in participants' learning as a result of the work together; forming new learning as a result of the work together; forming new relationships among school-based educators), how, if at all, do the diverse ambitions affect the nature of the work?

To begin to explore these questions, we examined a relationship between a university-based researcher and two teachers in a professional development school. This school was the site of a large, school-based project in which university reseachers, graduate students, and classroom teachers engaged in collaborative study, teaching, and research. The school-based project focused on studying and improving instructional practices in the contexts of teaching science, social studies, and language arts. A common question cutting across the different subject matters was how writing and discourse could be used effectively to promote learning for all students.

The university researcher worked with teachers in two different formats in this project. The first was a weekly seminar meeting in which the university researcher and a group of teachers discussed instructional issues and problems arising from their efforts to teach in new ways. The seminar served as a prelude to and an extension of classroom-based work. It made room for teachers to develop their own learning goals and it was a place to build trust among the teachers and university researchers that could lead to collaborative classroom-based work. The second format was a fifth-grade classroom where the university researcher and the classroom teacher jointly taught language arts.

Our examination of the university researcher's work initially began as a project for a doctoral seminar on guiding teacher learning taught by Sharon Feiman-Nemser and Cheryl Rosaen. As students in the course, we chose to observe Cheryl's work with Beverly and Ruth, two teachers in the school-based project. We observed a weekly meeting of the project's seminar group, focusing on Cheryl's interactions with Ruth. Then we observed Cheryl's work in Beverly's language arts classroom at the point in their co-teaching where they were beginning to implement a writer's workshop. Observing Cheryl's work in these two formats and probing her thinking about her work allowed us to compare and contrast the opportunities and drawbacks of each format.

After thinking about the incidents we observed, we realized we had many more questions than we started with. We became aware of unforeseen complexities in guided practice. We saw, for example, that roles shifted as participants took turns being novices and experts, both in relation to subject matter and pedagogy. This led to a set of questions about guided practice relationships in collaborative contexts. Who is novice and expert in the evolving relationship that guides and teachers establish? Whose agenda gets worked on—the teacher's or the guide's? What happens when the two agendas conflict? When a guide is responsible for both the students and teachers' learning, how does she balance these dual obligations? Can this kind of guided practice work contribute to altering norms of interactions among teachers and between classroom-based and university-based educators? How, if at all, did Cheryl's role as not only a guide and participant in the collaborative project, but also a researcher of the project, affect the work that was done?

The more we pursued our thinking about these new questions, the clearer it became that we were not alone in our struggle to understand the work. Cheryl, as guide, was also exploring such questions. Our mutual struggles resulted in an ongoing conversation among the three of us about the incidents we observed and the questions the incidents raised about guided practice work. This paper is the outgrowth of that conversation. The incidents, then, are told from the "observers'" point of view, but interwoven throughout are Cheryl's insights that emerged as we worked together to understand the guided practice incidents and their meaning. Tapping the perspectives of both the insiders and outsiders led us to see more complexities and uncover more of the tensions embedded in this professional activity. We begin this chapter with a description and commentary on each incident followed by a discussion of issues each incident raises. We then look more broadly across the two forms of guided practice to investigate their potential for supporting teachers' learning.

Cheryl's Guided Practice Work with Ruth in the Seminar Group

The seminar group was Cheryl's primary contact with Ruth and served as a place for her to find out about Ruth's concerns regarding the changes she was attempting in her classroom. Since Ruth wanted to change her practices in social studies and Cheryl's area of expertise was language arts, their mutual interests centered around more general issues of teaching and learning (e.g., assessment, facilitating effective classroom discussions, using writing effectively across subject matter areas). Another member of the group with a background in social studies did classroom-based work with Ruth. Still, Cheryl felt responsible for supporting Ruth's learning in the seminar group as an extension of the work Ruth was doing in her classroom.

At the time of our study, university collaborators were trying to share leadership with the classroom teachers in the seminar. To this end, they involved the teachers in planning the agenda for each meeting. It was report card time and the teachers were concerned that the district's "satisfactory/unsatisfactory" rating system did not promote the kind of assessment they were trying to accomplish in their classrooms. The group decided to focus their next seminar session on developing an alternative form of assessment in science, social studies, and language arts which would be more reflective of their current teaching goals. They had invited the building principal, a classroom teacher, and a university collaborator to attend this session because of their interest in these issues. They also hoped the principal would support their idea of trying out an alternative reporting format. The session required Ruth to make her ideas and concerns about assessment more "public" than usual.

This description focuses on just one of many aspects of the seminar group, Cheryl's interactions with Ruth. Ruth and Beverly shared instruction with their two groups of fifth graders; Beverly taught language arts to both groups while Ruth was responsible for teaching social studies. Ruth was a mature woman who had only begun teaching five years ago. Beverly was about the same age as Ruth, but had been teaching for over 20 years. In Cheryl's mind, Ruth and Beverly brought to the seminar very different backgrounds, teaching experiences, and learning needs, which she tried to keep in mind during each session.

The Seminar Group Incident

Cheryl assumed her usual role as facilitator of the seminar. Since the group had discussed and read about portfolios in previous meetings, Cheryl started the conversation by talking about the role portfolios could play both in assessing student learning and in communicating to parents and others what the students were learning. The teachers were working on writing narratives to send home to parents prior to conferences. The narratives were to include a description of fall teaching activities and an accompanying set of grading criteria for science, social studies, and language arts. As the other participants got out their drafts, Ruth said, "I thought I would stick with the report card, but it doesn't really address the stuff that . . . I guess I would appreciate some input."

To make sure Ruth understood the task the group had agreed upon, Cheryl turned to the visitors and reviewed the group's previous discussion—that they were dissatisfied with the current report card and had developed a plan for approaching the issue. In response, Ruth described a dilemma she faced in grading students since she had stopped giving textbook assignments and therefore had no letter grades listed in her grade book: "Traditionally there has always been that black and white assessment . . . I am really struggling to try . . . I banged my head against the wall to try and put into words . . . I know how to assess things . . . but . . ." As her voice trailed off, Cheryl could see that Ruth understood the problems with the traditional reporting form but, unlike her colleagues, had not yet come up with specific ideas about how to replace the old with something new.

To provide a concrete example for Ruth, Cheryl asked another university collaborator to read her draft and explain how she developed it for science. Cheryl then asked Beverly and another teacher to do the same for language arts. Cheryl hoped Ruth would get some direction from hearing how her colleagues had turned the previous week's general discussion into specific narratives and lists of criteria.

Ruth did not participate in the discussion. Instead, she spent the time writing a list of criteria for social studies by adapting the science list. While Ruth was working, the group moved on to discuss whether the lists should look different in each subject matter, or whether there could be a general list of criteria that would apply to all areas. Ruth interrupted the conversation to report to the group, "I changed mine a bit from what they did . . . I could easily change a few words and make it make sense from the fact of learning to make sense of historical evidence." She then read her modified list aloud.

Noting that Ruth had not adopted the group's position on the need for unique lists in each subject area, Cheryl offered another concrete example for Ruth to consider, "Let me read you the writing one [developed for third grade] because I think this one is more subject-specific." Since the rest of the group was finished exploring the topic, Cheryl decided to move the conversation along rather than continuing to pursue the topic with Ruth. The conversation shifted to discussing how parents might respond to the new reporting forms. Ruth picked up on this topic and suggested sending a survey home to parents on their reaction to the grading criteria and also having the students respond to a similar survey. Cheryl supported Ruth's idea, commenting that parents play a critical role in the reporting process. Ruth talked more about involving students in the reporting process and eventually shifted the focus by suggesting the idea of using a daily checklist to monitor students' specific behaviors delineated on the criteria lists.

As Ruth became more and more excited about the possibilities of a daily checklist, Cheryl tried to remind her that the group wanted to get away from checklists. Offering another alternative, Cheryl suggested that an anecdotal notebook might be a more fruitful way of keeping track of what actually happens in the classroom. When Ruth said, "That is what I am talking about," Cheryl wondered whether they were envisioning the same thing. She suspected that Ruth did not fully appreciate the significance of changing the reporting forms from a checklist format to something that included more detail. She tried another tactic, returning to the topic of portfolios, another alternative to checklists: "Getting feedback from kids about daily classroom events is one of the powers of the portfolio stuff." Then she talked about how a portfolio might help in assessment and how students could be involved in the process.

Commentary

Cheryl had to work very hard to meet the needs of the group while also meeting Ruth's needs. Later she commented that she did not want to "embarrass her in front of her principal" or draw undue attention to the fact that Ruth did not develop her draft as the others had. Cheryl also realized Ruth was at a different point than the other project participants with respect to thinking deeply about her practice of assessing student learning, and wondered how to address these differences in such a public forum.

Instead of confronting Ruth's confusion head on, Cheryl decided to be more indirect by explaining to the visitors the background on why the group was engaged in their task. She actually provided the explanation for Ruth's benefit, not for the visitors. Later, she explained her intentions: "This served to reorient Ruth to the task without drawing undue attention to the fact that she had not done the criteria list."

She also diverted attention away from Ruth when she launched into the ideas of developing a checklist. Not only did Cheryl consider this suggestion inappropriate, she also knew it was something the group wanted to avoid. Instead of confronting this difference directly, Cheryl tried a more indirect tactic, discussing portfolios. She indicated later in an interview that she thought it was more appropriate to discuss the differences between the two forms of assessment privately with Ruth. Because Ruth was struggling with ideas on which the rest of the group had developed consensus, Cheryl felt that a public discussion would benefit no one.

The Seminar Group as a Form of Guided Practice

Strictly speaking, the seminar group may not constitute a form of guided practice because it is not situated in classroom work directly. Yet, the seminar did connect directly to participants' classroom work. Discussions focused on the teachers' practices and served as a prelude to or extension of classroom-based work.

In the context of the project, the seminar provided an opportunity for everyone to "touch base" weekly. A time to study and reflect on readings, it was also a time to share the joys, frustrations, and problems associated with implementing classroom changes. The wide participation and public nature of the seminar produced a diversity of ideas and experiences for discussion that would not have been generated by a guide and teacher working alone.

But the public nature of the seminar created problems. Teachers typically teach behind closed doors and typical school norms have not encouraged teachers to acknowledge in public to colleagues or administrators difficulties they might be experiencing in their classrooms as they attempt to change their practice. Part of the mission of the project was to change these norms and create a more open atmosphere among university faculty, classroom teachers, and administrators. But change of this sort is not accomplished easily, so the work of the seminar existed in the gray area of transition between teaching as a private endeavor and teaching as a public activity. In this instance, Cheryl was vividly aware of the presence of Ruth's principal and colleagues who did not participate regularly in the group and was concerned about Ruth's perceived and actual vulnerability in front of them. Her decision to handle the difficulties in a more indirect manner caused her to let a "teachable" moment pass, even though she saw the potential value of discussing the topic more directly and indeed might bring it up later in a private moment if the opportunity arose.

An additional limitation with a seminar group as a form of teacher support is its distance from classroom work. Because the group met weekly, issues that arose in the classroom were often "lost" by the time the group met. There was no opportunity for reflection-in-action about specific events and instructional problems (Schon, 1987). Reflection took place either post-hoc and based on a teacher's description of an event that was already distant in time and place, or on a speculative level where teachers reflected on what might happen if they tried a certain idea.

Relationships in the Seminar

Cheryl's intentions to facilitate rather than direct the seminar group created a challenge for her in helping Ruth perceive greater complexity in her approach to assessment. In general, Cheryl did not want to "lay it on them," but instead she wanted to be a guide who works with teachers to change aspects of their practice that they have identified. But Ruth may not have been ready to think deeply about issues raised by her colleagues in the group. Like classroom teachers, Cheryl had to balance the learning needs of the group with the learning needs of an individual teacher.

Although Ruth often commented on her lack of experience compared to the other teachers and her feelings that she could not contribute anything to the group, Cheryl saw it as her responsibility to support Ruth in gaining more confidence and recognizing what she did have to offer. All of the teachers, including Ruth, brought insights on curriculum development, district requirements, and life in classrooms. The university collaborators brought both their own teaching experience and a knowledge base of current literature and research not readily available to teachers involved in the daily press of classroom responsibilities. Ruth was the fifth-grade teams' social studies teacher and, relative to her teammates, was an expert on teaching social studies. Relative to Cheryl, a language arts specialist, she was also an expert in social studies teaching. All seminar participants were both expert and novice at different times, around different issues.

In this incident, the form of the seminar format and the varied experiences of the different teachers caused some unique dilemmas. How could Cheryl meet the needs of experienced teachers who are focusing on complex issues in their teaching and still meet Ruth's needs as a less experienced teacher? If Cheryl established different groups for novice and experienced teachers, would the panoply of ideas generated in the heterogeneous group be diminished? How do Cheryl and her colleagues balance their need to establish new norms of openness in their existing relationships among teachers and administrators in the school with the teachers' need for privacy to work on complex issues without fear of embarrassment or other consequences? In addition to the challenge of working with a group of teachers with differing needs, Cheryl faced another challenge by assuming multiple roles within the project. Not only was she trying to effect change in the individual teachers' classrooms through her guided practice work with them, she also was trying to document the changes that resulted from this work. These multiple roles as researcher, staff developer in a professional development school, and guide to individual teachers created tensions for Cheryl to manage.

Co-teaching with Beverly

As a second form of guided practice, co-teaching offered very different conditions for teacher support and learning. It was individual and intensive. It was also carried out with and influenced by the learners in the classroom. Thus, it provided a complementary view of Cheryl's work with teachers.

In the previous year of the project, Beverly had read about and tried out some new ideas in teaching writing. She thought she was starting to view teaching writing differently, but wanted help in acting on the new images she was developing. Cheryl also believed that if Beverly was going to think differently about the role writing and discussion could play in supporting students' learning (one goal of the project), Beverly would need to examine carefully, and perhaps revise extensively, her current practices in teaching writing. Cheryl also wanted to try out new teaching practices in a fifth-grade context (a new context for her). Cheryl and Beverly decided that co-teaching was a way for two experienced teachers, each drawing on their unique knowledge and experience, to try out and reflect on implementing a new instructional model together.

Throughout the year in which Cheryl co-taught the two fifth-grade classes (which included both Beverly's and Ruth's students), she was typically in the classroom four days a week during the language arts period. Cheryl and Beverly generally shared both the planning and teaching of the classes. They talked often during the week about classroom occurrences, student learning, and what they planned to do next. Both teachers viewed their classroom teaching and their conferences as part of their guided practice work.

The Classroom Incident

This incident occurred on the first day of a new writing unit when new routines and norms were being introduced. Prior to this, students had been directed to write about certain topics and in particular forms. On this day, in the new "workshop" format, students were to choose their own topic and decide for themselves how to write about it.

Cheryl began a mini-lesson on topic selection which was followed by individual writing time. She wrote story ideas on the board such as "half-time at the football game," "first time skiing," and "being in church." She showed a close-up picture of a planet's surface and said, "Some of you suggested this reminded you of Mars or dreams." She then showed other pictures and asked students what they thought when they saw them. The aim of this discussion was to generate writing ideas and to help students realize that they could write different things about the same picture based on their own feelings and experiences.

Cheryl told students to consider what they wanted to write about by asking themselves two questions: "What do I know about the topic?" and "Does it matter to me?" She also asked them to consider the form of their writing—story, paragraph, letter, and poem. Throughout the lesson, Cheryl emphasized that students could choose what and how to write.

After Cheryl finished talking, many students clustered around the pictures. Cheryl walked around the room talking to students about their ideas. Some students wrote topic ideas in their writing journals, such as Nintendo, Game-Boy, TV. Others wrote. Others appeared to be still thinking about their writing. During this time, Beverly stayed behind her desk doing paperwork. This was unusual for Beverly who generally got quite involved in Cheryl's lessons. But it was fall parent conference week and Beverly took advantage of Cheryl's teaching time to get ready. She did not join Cheryl in talking to students about their writing.

As Cheryl began to have longer conversations with students who were writing, the noise in the classroom increased. Cheryl stopped to tell that class that the noise might be making it harder for them to write. The noise continued. A few minutes later, Cheryl, clearly annoyed with students' behavior, spoke up again:

> I'm beginning to wonder if I have a voice today. Didn't I just say, wasn't that me just a few minutes ago that asked you to keep your voices down? Now, we need to concentrate on keeping your voices down, if you need to talk. This needs to be a place where people can think. Let's try it again.

The noise abated a bit but then built back up. About 15 minutes before the class period was over, Beverly jumped in for the first time, saying she couldn't take the students' behavior anymore. She lectured them with what she later called her "canned speech 105," and then told them she wanted students to remain in their seats for the rest of the writing time without talking.

Post-class Conference

After class, Beverly and Cheryl used the limited time they had to talk about the lesson, focusing on three issues: (1) what they thought about student behavior during the lesson; (2) what Cheryl and Beverly were trying to accomplish with the workshop; and (3) what they needed to do next. The obvious first point in the discussion was Beverly's lecture, since it had dramatically changed the atmosphere and tone in the classroom for the remainder of writing time. In an effort to explain her own thinking and to make the issue prominent, Cheryl commented:

> You see, you took a different tactic than I did. I was going to let them sink and then next time bring them back and say, "Look how much time you've had and look what you did." . . . So calling over kids who had nothing and just saying, "This is not going to work."

Cheryl made explicit that she had been dealing deliberately with student behavior in a way she thought most beneficial—to let natural consequences follow—and was not merely ignoring the fact that the class was noisy. As Cheryl said later, she wanted Beverly to know what this was not a case of "that I was just too dumb to notice or that once I had told the kids twice to be quiet, I didn't know what else to do."

Because she was not going to be present for the next writing period, Cheryl wanted to make sure to talk about what should happen on the following day. Cheryl's main concern was how to deal with students who had not worked during the lesson within the long-term framework of what they were trying to accomplish by using the workshop format. She told Beverly:

> You see I'm really concerned about them just not having enough time [to adjust to the workshop format]. I mean today was the first day they really had any time to write . . . [I want to] hook into the kids who haven't made a go of it yet and see what we can do.

Beverly answered that she could have students share what they had done on this day because she thought that might embarrass those that hadn't accomplished anything: "I think that may bring home the point." Then she quickly changed the conversation to her talk to the class:

> I couldn't take it anymore . . . [laughter]. I'm sorry. I just couldn't outlast you, Cheryl. I was trying to be, you know, real like . . .and then I thought, "I can't deal with this." I mean, I thought, ummm . . . So I gave them my little canned speech 105 or something.

Cheryl was aware of Beverly's discomfort with her choice of action and her attempt to apologize for what she had done. She also realized that this action was not typical for Beverly. Instead of exploring Beverly's comment and her reaction to the class, Cheryl tried a different tactic. Partly she was unsure about whether and how to challenge Beverly at a time when she was just beginning a new format in her teaching; partly she felt the time constraints. Cheryl knew that Beverly was going to continue the workshop without her the next day, and wanted to direct Beverly's thinking in a positive direction. So Cheryl started pushing for the idea of setting up a good environment for writing in the classroom (which in her mind did not include lectures and silent writing). Cheryl thought there could be different places set aside in the classroom for students to work when they were at different stages in the writing process. She explained:

> I was thinking about how we wanted the environment to evolve and one part of the evolution could be if you are in your desk, you are silent. And if you are here [pointing to a large table in the room she thought they could use for editing] you are conferencing, and if you are there, you are doing something else.

Mindful of the time, they turned their conversation to what to do the following day. Cheryl asked if, in addition to problem-solving with the class on how to get more writing done (which Cheryl offered as an alternative to Beverly's idea of embarrassing those who had no writing to share), Beverly thought it might be useful to model a writing conference for those students who had completed drafts. Beverly suggested that she use her modeling of a conference as the lead-in for discussing the problem of students who had not written. Cheryl agreed, but added that she thought they needed to do more than make students who had not written feel badly. Students began to come back into the room at this point in the conference, so Cheryl and Beverly quickly made plans to continue the discussion.

Commentary

Throughout the lesson and conference, Cheryl focused on students' experiences and learning. She made explicit to Beverly her thinking while teaching ("You and I took different tactics. I was going to . . ."), what she as a teacher was concerned about (how to engage all students in writing), and her thinking about how the writing should proceed (setting up an environment, modeling conferences). In listening to the conference and observing the lesson, it was clear that Cheryl and Beverly brought different concerns to the problem of establishing a writers' workshop in the classroom that day, and different conceptions of how immediate actions might lead to long-term goals.

During the lesson when Cheryl felt she needed to quiet down the class, she connected the management of the class to the substantive task of writing. Her point was that quieting down the class was not something to tackle in isolation, but to connect to students' writing needs. Writers need quiet to concentrate. The role Cheryl played as teacher was to guide students through the choices they were making. She wanted students to be able to walk around the room, decide what they wanted to work on, and talk to each other. These features seemed essential to Cheryl in setting up fruitful writing experiences in which students played a major part in decision-making.

In the conference, Cheryl focused on setting up an authentic writing environment for students and using that as a basis for how she and Beverly managed the class. Cheryl said:

> My instinct tells me that those boys have got to somehow come up with a way to be by themselves so that they can concentrate and write. If you [Beverly] could do it as part of your negotiating and not as "Sit over there because you are not behaving!" then they are going to see it as a positive thing instead of as a punishment.

She explored further that perhaps the cluster arrangement of desks was not appropriate for writing: "I think if you are sitting in a cluster like that, if we sat there right now and then said let's get to work and write and not talk to each other, it would be very hard to do."

In the lesson and in the conference, Beverly approached the problem of student management quite differently. Her concerns focused on what she thought her particular students could handle and how they worked best, and this advice came from her past experience where she had more control over writing tasks than a workshop format allowed. She chose to quiet student noise by lecturing them. Her desire for less noise seemed to stem from her sense of what noise level was appropriate for this classroom in relation to her own comfort level, not from what she thought might be necessary to write. The role Beverly adopted during this lesson was to take away students' control over what they were doing. They could not talk to anyone and had to remain seated.

In the conference, her ideas about managing students were likewise focused on student behavior rather than writing—for example, what possible seating arrangement would stop a particular group of boys from talking. In response to Cheryl's comments on why a different seating arrangement would be helpful to the boys, Beverly said, "I was thinking that if we just changed groups . . . just separating them as we start out would help."

Cheryl's and Beverly's solutions to the problems in actuality might have looked the same—they both may have ended up separating the talkative boys—but their conversation pointed out that the thinking behind their solutions came from very different sources. It is difficult to write about the differences without sounding critical of Beverly. Cheryl's way of thinking about management as a pedagogical problem tied to the substance of what is being taught is certainly more aligned to current thinking about classroom management than Beverly's approach, which treats management separate from content. Perhaps because this new approach to writing instruction required her to redefine her role as teacher, Beverly had not yet figured out how to integrate the two areas.

The differences in their thinking seemed to reflect much more than who was right and who was not; they reflected the expertise each brought to co-teaching. Cheryl brought a more fully developed sense of a writers' workshop as an instructional model—what it would mean to have students writing in classrooms and what might be necessary to accomplish it. Beverly brought a more fully developed sense of working with these particular fifth-grade students—what they are like, what they have done in the past, what they are capable of doing, what their limits are, and how they best work. How did these strengths play out as they engaged together in co-teaching?

Issues Raised About Guided Practice

Co-Teaching as a Form of Guided Practice

Co-teaching provided opportunities for Cheryl to extend her own thinking about writing instruction. Although a knowledgeable language arts researcher and experienced teacher, Cheryl had limited experiences in establishing a writers' workshop in an elementary classroom. The opportunity to put her own thinking into action deepened her understanding of what the writing process might look like with fifth graders. Cheryl relied greatly on Beverly's experience with this age group and with working in this school in implementing the writers' workshop instructional model in the classroom.

Co-teaching also gave Cheryl a way to help Beverly think about teaching writing differently in her classroom with her students. She commented:

> I think this is the only way—well, not the only, but the more comfortable, way for me to help Beverly change her practice because I'm in it with her. Today was as much my failure as hers . . . There are kids I struggle with as much as she does. Sometimes, as an observer, you think you could get this kid going, but then you try it and whoa . . . it's just not there. So, I really think I'd have a completely different understanding of what she is up against even if I observed every day.

Even though Cheryl's co-teaching experience was very different from Beverly's, this way of working offered a picture of Beverly's "reality" and a chance to work out teaching decisions in the specific context of Beverly's classroom. What works or seems reasonable in the abstract, as Cheryl says, may not work with any particular group of students. The classroom materials or space may not be adequate to do the kinds of things either Beverly or Cheryl wants to do in setting up a writing environment. Time demands of other subjects, students' interest or writing experience, comments from other teachers, the school principal, or parents may change what is possible in writing this school year. In co-teaching, the guide and teacher work out the goals of the guided practice—in this example, change in writing practice—in the context of the classroom. In this way, both the guide's and teacher's strengths are needed to achieve the goals and they model their strengths for each other. The context provides a forum for developing a rich picture of what changed practice might look like. It also sets the boundaries within which the work proceeds.

Guiding practice from within also had drawbacks. By becoming a co-teacher, Cheryl concerned herself more directly with student learning than might be required of other forms of guided practice. She said of her commitment to students:

> I have a commitment to this working with these kids . . . The bottom line is—do I like what these kids are learning? But I can say, do I like what we have done about these kids' learning, not what you have done.

This example highlights a dilemma that can occur in any guided practice relationship—what happens when the vision of good teaching that the guide brings into the work contradicts the needs, desires, or images of the teacher involved? In this case, what would have happened if Beverly had decided that she no longer wanted a writers' workshop? Which commitment—to students having authentic writing experiences or to Beverly's learning—would have taken precedence in Cheryl's work?

Although it seems unlikely that Cheryl's commitment to both students' and Beverly's learning would create mutually exclusive demands, the dual commitments still created tensions. In their post-class conference, Cheryl mainly focused on student learning as a way of communicating what she thought should guide teaching and management decisions. Her concerns centered around what kind of "problem-solver" Beverly was going to be the next time and how she was going to set up the classroom so as to facilitate process writing. She commented later:

> I also don't feel real comfortable with Beverly being the problem-solving facilitator on Thursday. The part I don't feel comfortable about is that I think she is going to shame them into wanting to improve the atmosphere by, "I see, you didn't have something to share like Brenda did," and that is not the point.

The practical and immediate concerns that arose out of her role as teacher of children dominated the conversation: what Beverly was going to do the next day with students and how she could help Beverly be the kind of problem-solver Cheryl saw as helpful. Cheryl chose not to confront directly what she viewed as an inappropriate management decision. Instead, she focused on what to do next in the classroom, modeling her thinking about how management concerns link to concerns about teaching writing. As a result, a potentially rich area of Beverly's thinking went unexplored in the conference. Why did Beverly say the things she did? Did she perceive the class to be out of control? If so, did that make her uneasy? Why did she say she was "sorry" to Cheryl? All these questions would have been fruitful topics for Cheryl and Beverly to explore, but because Cheryl's guided practice included the need to teach students—something that is very time-consuming and cannot be put off—these questions went unexplored. Moreover, the opportunity to support Beverly in a serious moment of uncertainty passed by. Faced with the choice of how to use limited time, Cheryl chose to discuss what would happen the next day; as a result, the opportunity to probe and understand Beverly's thinking more fully was restricted.

The lesson and conference highlight the problem of dual goals inherent in co-teaching. When a guide is responsible for both student and teacher learning, do either get the attention they need? Although most guides are concerned with what happens to students in the classrooms of the teachers with whom they work, the guide's primary focus is the teacher making sense of change, not changing student experiences directly on a daily basis. So Cheryl's work added a dimension to the process. On the one hand, it gave her a richer picture of what the issues and problems were in changing practice. It allowed her to become Beverly's colleague in defining and confronting instructional problems and exchange thinking in specific instructional contexts. On the other hand, it used up a great deal of the scarce time Cheryl had to work with Beverly. It also could have led to an unproductive learning experience for Beverly if unresolvable tensions over the character of instruction arose.

The Notion of Expertise & Experience in Co-teaching

How does the experience of the teachers working with Cheryl shape the joint work? Since teachers at different career stages look at their practices differently and voice different concerns (Carter, 1990), guiding the practice of experienced teachers should probably be different from guiding less experienced teachers. Before we observed this instance of guided practice, this question seemed straightforward. Our observations introduced complexities. What does "experience" mean when teachers undertake major changes in their practice? And how does this affect the work of guided practice?

Beverly asked Cheryl to help her change her practice because she wanted to try out new ideas about writing instruction. Her interest in changing her writing instruction marked her as an experienced teacher willing to deal with complex practical concerns. In changing practice, she became a novice of sorts and some of her reactions during the lesson and conference seemed to reflect this. She demanded silence and stillness in the classroom regardless of its effect on student writing. She seemed to translate the complex issue of setting up an appropriate writing environment in a classroom to a solution of separating boys that talk too much. The "newness" of a writers' workshop in her classroom—figuring out what it meant, what it felt like to give students greater control, what student behavior it induced—may have created in Beverly the same needs for control and certainty that novice teachers often have. As her guide, Cheryl needed to recognize and attend to these needs while she also supported Beverly in continuing to try out new practices.

Cheryl, too, was a novice in setting up writers' workshops with fifth graders. She knew what kind of writing experiences she wanted to foster for students and what classroom management might facilitate such experiences, but actually doing what she wanted and guiding Beverly through the experience was something new. Her attempts to help students see that they needed quiet to write did not meet with immediate success in the classroom. Aware that her chosen approach was not a "proven" way to manage the situation, her previous teaching experience told her it was worth a try. Her attempts in the conference to share her thinking with Beverly about how decisions about managing the classroom must be consistent with goals for writing may also not have met immediate success. Cheryl was still learning how to accomplish her goals with students and her goals with Beverly while managing tensions between the goals. So although Beverly and Cheryl brought considerable expertise to this endeavor, they brought inexperience as well.

Much of the literature about guided practice between university and school teachers portrays the role of expert and novice, inexperienced and experienced, as constant (Apelman, 1986; Stallings, 1986). Guides are perceived as having greater expertise and teachers are labelled as preservice, beginning, or experienced. Given that teachers continually confront contexts that are unfamiliar—new students each year, new curriculum, new ideas about practice—we began to wonder if the labels "experienced" and "novice" may not be so fixed, but rather appear and disappear in a teacher along with the behaviors associated with those labels. The same is true for the guide. If the guided practice aim is to help teachers think differently about curriculum, teaching, and learning, then perhaps most teachers involved in the work are "novices" in some essential ways.

Teachers' Understanding of Change

In looking at how Ruth and Beverly responded to change we saw a common problem for Cheryl. How could she assess what and how much the two teachers understood about the change being undertaken. Cheryl said of Beverly's understanding of writers' workshop:

> I think intellectually she understands what it means for kids to have ownership of their writing. In reality . . . she doesn't know or trust what it would really feel like as a teacher to have it happen.

In the seminar discussion on assessment, Cheryl raised the possibility of using an anecdotal notebook in which teachers could write down observations of their students throughout the day. Ruth interpreted this suggestion to mean a checklist of children's behavior. Although the teachers may have used or understood the rhetoric of change—kids taking ownership of their writing or alternative assessment devices—they may not have understood how or what it meant to have the change play out in their classroom practices. Beverly may have understood intellectually and agreed with the notion of student choice in writing, but she was clearly uncomfortable with what happened in the classroom when the time came for students to exercise choice (including the choice not to work). Her classroom management choice reflected thinking that fit with a different instructional model when she immediately removed choice from the students and brought to the fore a fear of the consequences of misbehavior, rather than interest in writing. Similarly, Ruth thought it was important to measure more than student worksheets, but was confused about how to do that. What kinds of information should she record and about what topics so that her assessment related to her instruction? Cheryl had to figure out what Beverly's and Ruth's perceptions were and then decide how and when to address them.

One problem in moving teachers from a beginning understanding of complex change to a deeper one is that they may never have experienced the kind of change they are attempting to implement as learners (Cohen and Ball, 1990). Another problem may be that they have few images of what the change might look like in their classrooms (Kennedy, 1991). The seminar group offers the opportunity for guides and teachers to experience, as teachers and learners, a "new" kind of learning. For instance, guides and teachers could write and could engage in the "new" discourse around writing or try out different ways of assessing each others' writing. Both of these experiences could be helpful to teachers in figuring out what their students as learners would experience with the "new" instruction. What the group lacks is the occasion to work out ideas in the context of teachers' classrooms, and the choice of when to make one's confusion and uncertainty public. Ruth and Beverly could experience writing in seminar as well as alternative assessments of their writing, but they would not learn to use new devices in their classrooms nor to transfer the knowledge gained as a learner to their classroom teaching. Follow up to help them transfer learning is needed.

Co-teaching allows guides to work with instructional change in the teachers' classrooms. In this case, co-teaching allowed Cheryl the opportunity to show Beverly what it could mean in her specific classroom context to carry out a writers' workshop model over time. But co-teaching does not offer teachers chances to be learners of content in different ways. In thinking about Beverly's comments on the class and her ideas about what to do next, her understanding of writing seemed limited as evidenced by her request for silence or her lack of understanding that students might need to be separated to do the writing work. If Beverly does not have authentic writing experiences in her own life, can she as a teacher understand what is necessary to provide them for her students? Can teachers change practice so that teaching and learning look different without a sense of what it means to be a learner of the "new" content? If in the best of all possible worlds teachers need both experience with change as learners and experience with change as teachers, how can both opportunities be provided? Additionally, how should these two experiences interplay?

Different Agendas in Guided Practice

A final set of questions raised by our observations was, "On whose agenda does guided practice work?" In co-teaching, Cheryl wanted students to experience a different kind of writing through their experiences in a writers' workshop and she wanted to help Beverly learn to teach writing differently. Both Cheryl and Beverly set these goals. In the group, Cheryl wanted to support Ruth and a group of experienced teachers in their attempts to change the way they evaluated their students. Again, this goal was set jointly by the teachers and Cheryl. In co-teaching and in the seminar, Cheryl was responsible for guiding more than one learner.

Cheryl clearly felt more comfortable than Beverly in taking the important initial step of giving students choice over their writing and allowing them more time and space in which to write. For example, in the post-class conference, Beverly expressed her concern that students had been given too much choice in their writing, too quickly, as Cheryl and Beverly were shifting from a more traditional model to a writers' workshop instructional model. Cheryl responded to her concerns, "Well, there is no way to do it gradually. It, well, I'm sure there are ways to change it, but it can't be very gradual to say, 'You can write on anything you want.'" Cheryl also felt that she and Beverly had already provided gradual support during the previous months and that it was time to let go of some of the instructional decisions the teachers were making. Beverly and Cheryl had agreed that they would proceed in taking this next step; however, actually taking the step caused Beverly to reclaim whatever freedoms and choice Cheryl had given the students that day. Did Cheryl's timing in trying to foster an authentic writing experience that day push Beverly beyond where she was ready to go? Should Cheryl have delayed implementing the writers' workshop model until Beverly was more comfortable? Did Beverly understand what she had agreed to? Moreover, should she have focused more on her role as guide of Beverly's learning, taking into consideration her need for more control in the classroom, rather than her role as writing teacher in this fifth-grade classroom? In other words, if co-teaching is a form of guided practice, whose agenda in the classroom takes the foreground if the teacher's and guide's thinking or readiness for change do not match?

In the seminar, teachers were at different stages in their teaching careers. Because of this diversity, not all members had the same needs or shared vision of teaching. What happens to their voices when they have different visions from those of either their colleagues or mentor? Do they feel that their vision is "wrong" or that somehow they are inadequate? Or do they, like Ruth, become confused and uncertain about what they should do differently in their classrooms? Did Cheryl's need to support the other teachers in exploring alternative forms of assessment prevent her from listening to Ruth and working from where Ruth was to move her to a different place in her understanding?

Cheryl's multiple commitments made it difficult to decide what to work on. Should she focus on teachers' specific concerns or work on some broader agenda? How does a guide decide? What are the consequences of these decisions for teacher growth and learning?

Looking Back

In an essay about life on his Maine farm, E.B. White (1977) rebukes himself for generalizing about raccoon behavior after observing only one animal:

> When I wrote that a coon comes down a tree headfirst and then reverses herself when near the ground, touching down with one hind foot, I had observed only one coon in the act of leaving a tree. The coon I wrote about is no longer with us. . . . The new young coon, the one we have now, descends the tree headfirst but does not reverse when near the ground. She continues headfirst and steps off onto the lawn with one front foot. Moral: a man should not draw conclusions about raccoons from observing one individual (p. 43).

Writing this chapter, we were reminded of White's moral. The incidents of Cheryl's work with Beverly and Ruth were isolated glimpses of ongoing work.[2] We have talked with Cheryl about her work at various times since our observations and we have learned that the incidents were in many ways atypical and certainly do not represent the growth the teachers and the guide gained by the end of the school year. Nevertheless, the issues and problems that the incidents raised do represent—in both our and Cheryl's view—important ones to ask of guided practice in a collaborative context. To what extent can collaborative learning arrangements adequately support all participants' learning needs in appropriate ways? Can such arrangements actually alter traditional school norms to enable problems of practice to become public for exploration and inquiry? When educators engage in complex projects with multiple agendas, what are the barriers and contributions to effective guided practice work? What are the benefits and limitations of different forms of guided practice in collaborative contexts?

We have reached no definitive conclusions about these issues. Observing and thinking about Cheryl's work with Beverly and Ruth as examples of an effort to change practice, we came to appreciate why change is hard work. Cheryl, Beverly, and Ruth are thoughtful practitioners who have worked closely together. They bring diverse resources to their joint work and provide a great deal of support to each other. The conditions in which they work are also supportive of teacher learning and changed instruction. Yet, given all of that, the work they do is difficult. It is filled with uncertainty about how to change beliefs as well as how those beliefs will alter practice. It relies on understandings among people and a shared language and vision of what they are trying to do. It depends on time which may not always be available, and it exists in contexts which may not always be optimal. All of these aspects shape how Cheryl's work plays out with Beverly and Ruth and determine the extent and way in which their teaching practice will change and what they will learn in the process.

Endnotes

[1] Pseudonyms are used to refer to the teachers.

[2] For instance, Beverly and Cheryl continued to work at implementing the workshop model throughout the year and Beverly did, in fact, become much more comfortable with the uncertainty created by allowing for greater student control.

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